

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1872.

Old Kensington.

CHAPTER XI.

RABAN MEETS THE SHABBY ANGEL.



SOMETIMES winter days come in autumn, just as hours of old age and middle age seem to start out of their places in the due rotation of life and to meet us on the way. One October evening in the following year a damp fog was spreading over London, the lights from the windows streamed faintly upon the thick veils of vapour. Many noisy shadows were out and about, for it was Saturday night, and the winding Kensington thoroughfare was almost blocked by the trucks and the passers-by. It was only six o'clock, but the last gleam of light had died away behind the western chimney-tops; and with the darkness and notwithstanding the fog, a cheerful

saturnalia had begun. A loitering, a clamouring through the clouds of mist, witches with and without broomsticks, little imps darting through the crowd, flaring trucks drawn up along the road, housewives bargaining their Sunday dinners. It seemed a confusion of darkness, candles, paper-shades, oranges, and what not. Now and then some quiet west-end carriage would roll by, with lamps burning, through the mist, and horses

tramping steadily. Here and there, a bending head might be seen in some lighted window—it was before the time of Saturday half-holidays—the forge was blazing and hard at work, clink clank fell the iron strokes, and flames flashed from the furnace.

Beyond the church, and the arch, and the forge, the shop-lights cease, the fog seems to thicken, and a sudden silence to fall upon everything; while the great veils spread along the road, hiding away how many faces, hearths, and homelike rays. There are sometimes whole years in one's life that seem so buried beneath some gloomy shadow; people come and go, lights are burning, and voices sound, but the darkness hangs over everything, and the sun never seems to rise. A dull-looking broad-shouldered young man with a beard had come elbowing his way through the crowd, looking about him as he came along. After a moment's hesitation he turned up a side lane, looming away out of the region of lamps. It was so black and silent that he thought at first he must have been mistaken. He had been carefully directed, but there seemed no possibility of a house. He could just make out two long walls; a cat ran hissing along the top of one of them, a wet foggy wind flickered in his face, and a twig broke from some branch overhead. Frank Raban, for it was he, wondered if the people he was in search of could be roosting on the trees or hiding behind the walls this damp evening.

He was turning back in despair when suddenly a door opened, with a flash of light, through the brickwork, and a lantern was held out.

"Good-night," said a loud, cheerful voice; "why, your street lamp is out; take my arm, Rhoda. Go in, Dorothea, you will catch cold." And two figures, issuing from the wall like apparitions in the *Arabian Nights*, passed by hurrying along—a big, comfortable great-coat and a small dark thing tripping beside it. Meanwhile, the person who had let them out peeped for an instant into the blackness, holding the lantern high up so as to throw its light upon the lane. There came a sudden revelation of the crannies of an old brick wall; of creeping, green ivy, rustling in the light which seemed to flow from leaf to leaf; and of a young face smiling upon the dim vapours. It was all like the slide of a magic-lantern passing on the darkness. Raban almost hesitated to come forward, but the door was closing on the shining phantasmagoria.

"Does Lady Sarah Francis live here?" he said, coming up,

The girl started—looked at him. She, in turn, saw a red beard and a pale face appearing unexpectedly, and with a not unnatural impulse she half closed the door. "Yes," she said, retreating a step or two towards the house, which Raban could now see standing ghost-like within the outer wall. It was dimly lighted, here and there from the deep windows; it seemed covered with tangled creepers; over the open hall door an old-fashioned stone canopy still hung, dripping with fog and overgrown with ivy.

The girl, with her lantern, stood waiting on the steps. A blooming maiden, in a dark green dress, cut in some quaint old-fashioned way,

and slashed with black. Her dress was made of coarse homely stuff, but a gold chain hung round her neck; it twinkled in the lantern light. Her reddish-brown hair was pinned up in pretty twists, and some berries glistened among its coils.

"If you want to see Lady Sarah," she said, a little impatiently, "come in, and shut the garden door?"

He did as he was bid. She ran up the steps into the house, and stood waiting in the old hall, scanning him still by her lamplight. She had put the lantern on a corner of the carved chimney-sill, from whence its glimmers fell upon oaken panels and black and white flags of marble, upon a dark oak staircase winding up into the house.

"Will you go in there?" said the girl, in a low voice, pointing to an open door.

Then she quickly and noiselessly barred and fixed the heavy bolts; her hands slid along the old iron hasps and hooks. Raban stood watching her at work; he found himself comparing her to an ivy plant, she seemed to bloom so freshly in the damp and darkness, as she went moving hither and thither in her odd green gown. The next minute she was springing up the staircase. She stopped, however, on the landing, and leaned over the bannisters to point again, with a stiff quick gesture, to the open door.

Raban at last remembered that he had not given his name. "Will you kindly say that——"

But the green dress was gone, and Raban could only walk into the dark room, and make his way through unknown passes to a smouldering fire dying on the hearth. On his way he tumbled over a growl, a squeak. Then a chair went down, and a cat gave a yell, and sprang into the hall. It was an odd sort of place, and not like anything that Raban had expected. The usual proprieties of life have this advantage, that people know what is coming, and pull at a wire with a butler or a parlour-maid at the other end of it, who also know their parts, and in their turn correspond with an invisible lady upstairs, at the right-hand corner of the drawing-room fire-place. She is prepared to come forward with a nice bow, and to point to the chair opposite, which is usually on castors, so that you can pull it forward, and as you sit down you say, "I daresay you may remember," or "I have been meaning to," or, &c.

But the whole machinery seemed wanting here, and Frank Raban remained in the dark, looking through the unshuttered black windows, or at the smouldering ashes at his feet. At first he speculated on the ivy-maiden, and then, as the minutes went by and no one came, his mind travelled back through darkness all the way to the last time he had met Lady Sarah Francis, and the old sickening feeling came over him at the thought of the past. In these last few years he had felt that he must either fight for life or sink for ever. Heaven knows it was through no merit of his own that he had not been utterly wrecked; that he was here to-night, come to repay the debt he owed; that, more fortunate than many, he had struggled to shore. Kind hands had been held out to help him to

drag safe out of the depths. Lady Sarah's was the first; then came the younger, firmer grasp of some of his companions, whom he had left but a year or two ago in the old haunts, before his unlucky start in life. It was habit that had taken him back to these old haunts at a time when, by a fortunate chance, work could be found for him to do. His old friends did not fail him; they asked no questions; they did not try to probe his wounds; they helped him to the best of their ability, and stood by him as men stand by each other, particularly young men. No one was surprised when Mr. Raban was elected to one of the tutorships at All Saints. He had taken a good degree, he had been popular in his time, though now he could not be called a popular man. Some wondered that it should be worth his while to settle down upon so small an inducement. Henley, of St. Thomas's, had refused it when it was pressed upon him. Perhaps Raban had private means. He had lived like a rich man, it was said, after he left college. Poor Frank! Those two fatal years had eaten up the many lean kine that were to follow. All he had asked for now was work, and a hope of saving up enough to repay those who had trusted him in his dismay. His grandfather had refused to see him after his marriage. Frank was too proud a man to make advances, but not too proud to work. He gratefully took the first chance that came in his way. The morning he was elected he went to thank one or two of his supporters. He just shook hands, and said "Thank you;" but they did not want any fine speeches, nor was Frank inclined to make them.

Three years are very long to some people, while they are short to others. Mrs. Palmer had spent them away from her children not unpleasantly, except for one or two passing differences with the Captain, who had now, it was said, taken to offering up public prayers for Philippa's conversion. Lady Sarah had grown old in three years. She had had illness and money troubles, and was a poor woman comparatively speaking. Her hair had turned white, her face had shrunk, while Dolly had bloomed into brightness, and Frank Raban had grown into middle age, as far as hope and feeling went. There he sat in the warm twilight, thinking of the past—ah, how sadly! He was strong enough for to-day, and not without trust in the future; but he was still almost hopeless when he thought of the past. He had not forgiven himself. His was not a forgiving nature, and as long as he lived, those two fatal years of his life would make part of his sorrowful experience. Once Sarah Francis had tried to tell him—(but many things cannot be understood except by those who have first learnt the language)—that for some people the only possible repentance is to do better. Mere repentance, that dwelling upon past misery and evil doing, which people call remorse, is, as often as not, madness and meaningless despair.

Sometimes Frank wondered now at the irritation which had led him to rebel so furiously at his fate. Poor, gentle fate! he could scarcely understand his impatience with it now. Perhaps, if Emma had lived—

We often, in our blindness, take a bit of our life, and look at it apart

as an ended history. We take a phase incomplete, only begun, perhaps, for the finished and irrevocable whole. Irrevocable it may be, in one sense, but who shall say that the past is completed because it is past, any more than that we ourselves are completed because we die? Frank had not come to look at his own personal misdoings philosophically (as what honest man or woman would), or with anything but shrinking pain, as yet; he could bear no allusion to those sad days.

"You know Paris well, I believe, Mr. Raban," said some young lady. "How long is it since——"

He looked so odd and angry that she stopped, quite frightened. Dark fierce lines used to come under his heavy eyes at the smallest attempt to revive what was still so recent and vivid. If it was rude he could not help it.

He never spoke of himself. Strangers used to think Raban odd and abrupt when he sometimes left them in the middle of a sentence, or started away and did not answer. His old friends thought him changed, but after a great crisis we are used to see people harder. And this one talks, and you think he has told you all; and that one is silent, and he thinks he has told you nothing. And feelings come and go, the very power to understand them comes and goes, gifts and emotions pass, our inmost feelings change as we go on wandering through the narrow worlds that lie along the commonest commonplaces and ways of life. Into what worlds had poor Frank been wandering as he stood watching the red lights dull into white ashes by the blue tiles of the hearth!

Presently a lantern and two dark heads passed the window.

"Where is he?" said a voice in the hall. "Dolly, did you say Mr. Raban was here? What! all in the dark?"

The voice had reached the door by this time, and some one came and stood there for an instant. How well he remembered the kindly croaking tones! When he heard them again, it seemed to him as if they had only finished speaking a minute before.

Some one came and stood for an instant at the doorway. No blooming young girl with a bright face and golden head, but a grey-haired woman, stooping a little as she walked. She came forward slowly, set her light upon the table, and then looked at him with a pair of kind, shaggy eyes, and put out her long hand as of old.

Raban felt his heart warm towards the shabby face, the thick, kindly brows. Once that woman's face had seemed to him like an angel's, in his sorest need. Who says angels must be all young and splendid; will there not be some comforting ones, shabby and tender, whose radiance does not dazzle nor bewilder; whose faces are worn, perhaps, while their stars shine with a gentle tremulous light, more soothing to our aching, earth-bound hearts than the glorious radiance of brighter spirits? Raban turned very red when he saw his old friend. "How could you know I was here? You have not forgotten me?" he said; not in his usual reluctant way, but speaking out with a gentle tone in his voice. "I

should have come before, but I——” Here he began to stammer and to feel in his pocket. “Here it is,” and he pulled out a packet. “If it hadn’t been for you I should never have had the heart to set to work again. I don’t know what I should have done,” he repeated, “but for you.” And then he looked at her for an instant, and then, with a sudden impulse, Raban stooped—as he did so she saw his eyes were glistening—he stooped and kissed her cheek.

“Why, my dear?” said Lady Sarah, blushing up. She had not had many kisses in her life. Some people would as soon have thought of kissing the poker and tongs.

Raban blushed up too and looked a little foolish; but he quickly sobered down again. “You will find it all right,” he went on, quietly. “The one hundred and fifty pounds you lent me, and the interest for three years at five per cent., makes one hundred and sixty-five pounds,” said Raban, folding her long thin hand over the little parcel; “and good-night, and thank you.”

Still Lady Sarah hesitated. She could not bear to take it. She felt as though he had paid her twice over; that she ought to give it back to him, and say, “Here, keep it. I don’t want your money, only your kiss and your friendship. I was glad to help you.” But no, she *could not* give it back, she wanted the money so. She looked up in his pale face in a strange wistful way, scanning it with her grey eyes. They almost seemed to speak, and to say, “You don’t know how I want it, or I would not take it from you.”

“How changed you are!” she said at last, speaking very slowly. “I am afraid you have been working too hard to pay me. I oughtn’t to——” He was almost annoyed by this wistful persistency. Why did she stand hesitating? Why did she not take it, and put it in her pocket, and have done with it? Now again she was looking at the money with a pathetic look. And meanwhile Raban was wondering, Could it be that this woman cared for money—this woman, who had forced her help upon him so generously? He hated himself for the thought. This was the penalty, he told himself, for his own past life. This fatal suspicion and mistrust of others: even his benefactress, was not to be spared.

“I must be going,” he said, starting away in his old stiff manner. “You will let me come again, won’t you?”

“Come again! Of course you will come again,” Lady Sarah said, laying her thin fingers on his arm. “I shall not let you go now until you have seen my Dolly.” And so saying, she led him back into the hall. “Go in, you will find her there. I will come back,” said Lady Sarah, abruptly, with her hand on the door-handle. She looked quite old and feeble as she leant against the oak. Then again she seemed to remember herself. “You—you will not say anything of this,” she added, with a sudden imploring look; and she opened her thin fingers, still clutching the packet of bank-notes and gold, and closed them again.

Then he saw her take the lantern from the chimney and hurriedly

toil up the stairs, and he felt somehow that she was going to hide it away.

What would he have thought if he could have seen her safe in her own room, with the sovereigns spread out upon the bed and the bank-notes, while the poor soul stood eagerly counting over her store. Yes, she loved money, but there were things she loved still more, and for them she hoarded, and, at need, dispensed her secret stores for them—she sacrificed even her feelings. Sarah Francis, alone in the world, might have been a miser if she had not loved Dolly so dearly—Dolly, who was Stan's daughter. There was always just this difference between Lady Sarah and open-handed people. With them money means little—a moment's weakness, a passing interest. With Lady Sarah to give was doubt, not pleasure; it meant disorder in her balanced schemes; it meant truest self-denial: to give was to bestow on others what she meant for Dolly's future ease and happiness; and yet she gave.

CHAPTER XII.

DOROTHEA BY FIRELIGHT.

LADY SARAH had left Raban to go into the drawing-room alone. It was all very strange, he thought, and more and more like a crazy dream. He found himself in a long room of the colour of firelight, with faded hangings, sweeping mysteriously from the narrow windows, with some old chandeliers swinging from the shadows. It seemed to him, though he could not clearly see them, that there were ghosts sitting on the chairs, denizens of the kingdom of mystery, and that there was a vague flit and consternation in the darkness at the farther end of the room, when through the opening door the gleam of the lantern, which by this time was travelling upstairs, sped on with a long slanting flash. For a moment he thought the place was empty; the atmosphere was very warm and still; the firelight blazed comfortably; a coal started from the grate, then came a breath, a long, low, sleepy breath from a far-away corner. Was this a ghost? And then, as his eyes got accustomed, he saw that the girl who had let him in sat crouching by the fire. Her face was turned away; the light fell upon her throat and the harmonious lines of her figure. Raban, looking at her, thought of one of Lionardo's figures in the Louvre. But this was finer than a Lionardo. What is it in some attitudes that is so still, and yet that thrills with a coming movement of life and action? It is like the harmony of a bar progressing to its key-note; it is life, not inanimately resting, but suspended from motion as we see it in the old Greek art. That flying change from the now to the future is a wonder sometimes written in stone; it belongs to the greatest creations of genius as well as to the living statues and pictures among which we live.

So Dolly, unconscious, was a work of art, as she warmed her hands at the fire, her long draperies were heaped round about her, her hair caught the light and burnt like gold. If Miss Vanborough had been a conscious work of art she might have remained in her pretty attitude, but being a girl of sixteen, simple and somewhat brusque in manners, utterly ignoring the opinions of others, she started up and came to meet Raban, advancing quick through the dimness and the familiar labyrinth of chairs.

"Hush—sh!" she said, pointing to a white heap in a further corner, "Rhoda is asleep; she has been ill, and we have brought her here to nurse." Then she went back in the same quick silence, brought a light from the table, and, beckoning to him to follow her, led the way to the very darkest and shadiest end of the long drawing-room, where the ghosts had been flitting before them. There was a tall oak chair, in which she established herself. There was an old cabinet and a sofa, and a faded Italian shield of looking-glass, reflecting waves of brown and reddish light. Again Dolly motioned. Raban was to sit down there on the sofa opposite.

Since he had come into the house he had done little but obey the orders he had received. He was amused and not a little mystified by this young heroine's silent imperious manners. He did not admire them, and yet he could not help watching her, half in wonder half in admiration of her beauty. She, as I have said, did not think of speculating upon the impression she had created: she had other business on hand.

"I knew you at once," said Dolly, with the hardihood of sixteen, "when I saw you at the gate." As she spoke in her girlish voice, somehow the mystery seemed dispelled, and Raban began to realise that this was only a drawing-room and a young lady after all. Miss Vanborough was sitting on the high-backed chair erect, and like a picture with her gold chain round her neck.

"Ever since your letter came last year," she continued, unabashed, "I have hoped that you would come, and—and you have paid her the money she lent you, have you not?" said the girl, looking into his face doubtfully, and yet confidently too.

Raban answered by an immense stare. He was a man almost foolishly fastidious and reserved. He was completely taken aback and shocked by her want of discretion—so he chose to consider it. Dolly, utterly inexperienced and unused to the ways of the world, had not yet appreciated those refinements of delicacy with which people envelop the simplest facts of life.

Raban, living alone as he had done so long, at all times uncomfortably silent respecting himself, with no intimate friends to exercise his powers of confidence upon, could not be expected to give the details of his private affairs to this almost strange girl? "Dolly" conveyed no meaning whatever to his mind, although he might have guessed who she was. Even if Lady Sarah had not asked it of him, he would not have answered her. Whatever they may say, reserved people pique themselves upon some mental superiority in the reservations they make. Miss Vanborough

misinterpreted the meaning of the young man's confused looks and silence.

He had not paid the money! she was sorry. Oh, how welcome it would have been for Aunt Sarah's sake and for George's sake! Poor George! how should she ever ask for money for him now? Her face fell, she tried to speak of other things to hide her disappointment. Now she wished she had not asked the question—it must be so uncomfortable for Mr. Raban she thought. She tried to talk on; one little sentence came jerking out after another, and Raban answered more or less stiffly. "Was he not at Cambridge? Did he know her brother there—George Vanborough?"

Raban looked surprised, and said, "Yes, he knew a Mr. Vanborough slightly. He had known him at his tutor's years before." Here a vision of a stumpy young man flourishing a tankard rose before him. Could he be this beautiful girl's brother?

"Did he know her cousin, Robert Henley?" continued Dolly, eagerly.

Raban (who had long avoided Henley's companionship) answered even more stiffly that he had been a pupil of his, but did not see much of him. So the two talked on; but they had got into a wrong key, as people do at times, and they mutually jarred upon each other. Even their silence was inharmonious. Occasionally came a long, low, peaceful breath: it seemed floating on the warm shadows.

Everything was perfectly commonplace, and yet to Raban there seemed an element of strangeness and incongruity in the ways of the old house. There was something weird in the whole thing—the defiant girl, the sleeping woman, Lady Sarah, with her strange hesitations and emotions, and the darkness.—How differently events strike people from different points of view. Here was a commonplace half-hour, while old Sam prepared the seven o'clock tea with Marker's help—while Rhoda slept a peaceful little sleep: to Raban it seemed a strange and puzzling experience, quite out of the common run of half-hours.

Did he dislike poor Dolly? That off-hand manner was not Frank Raban's ideal of womanliness. Lady Sarah, with her chilled silence and restrained emotions, was nearer to it by far, old and ugly though she was. And yet he could not forget Dolly's presence for a single instant. He found himself watching, and admiring, and speculating about her almost against his will. She, too, was aware of this silent scrutiny, and resented it. Dolly was more brusque and fierce and uncomfortable that evening than she had ever been in all her life before. Dorothea Vanborough was one of those people who reflect the atmosphere somehow, whose lights come and go, and whose brilliance comes and goes. Dull fogs would fall upon her sometimes, at others sunlight, moonlight, or faint reflected rays would beam upon her world. It was a wide one, and open to all the winds of heaven.

So Frank Raban discovered when it was too late. He admired her

when he should have loved her. He judged her in secret when he should have trusted or blamed her openly. A day came when he felt he had forfeited all right even to help her or to protect her, and that, while he was still repenting for the past, he had fallen (as people sometimes do who walk backwards) into fresh pitfalls.

"My cousin Robert has asked me and Rhoda to spend a day at Cambridge in the spring," said Dolly, reluctantly struggling on at conversation.

Frank Raban was wondering if Lady Sarah was never coming back.

There was a sigh, a movement from the distant corner.

"Did you call me?" said a faint, shrill voice, plaintive and tremulous, and a figure rose from the nest of soft shawls and came slowly forward, dispersing the many wraps that lay coiling on the floor.

"Have I been asleep? I thought Mr. Henley was here?" said the voice, confusedly.

Dolly turned towards her. "No, he is not here, Rhoda. Sit down, don't stand; here is Mr. Raban come to see us."

And then in the dim light of the fire and distant candle, Raban saw two dark eyes looking out of a pale face that he seemed to remember.

"Mr. Raban!" said the voice.

"Have you forgotten?" said Dolly, hastily, going up to the distant sofa. "Mr. Raban, from Paris——" she began; then seeing he had followed her, she stopped; she turned very red. She did not want to pain him. And Raban, at the same moment, recognized the two girls he had seen once before, and remembered where it was that he had known the deep grey eyes, with their look of cold repulsion and dislike.

"Are you Mr. Raban?" repeated Rhoda, looking intently into her face. "I should have known you if it had not been so dark." And she instinctively put up her hand and clasped something hanging round her neck.

The young man was moved.

"I ought indeed to remember you," he said, with some emotion.

And as he spoke, he saw a diamond flash in the firelight. This, then, was the child who had wandered down that terrible night, to whom he had given his poor wife's diamond cross.

Rhoda saw with some alarm that his eyes were fixed upon the cross.

"I sometimes think I ought to send this back to you," she faltered on, blushing faintly, and still holding it tight-clasped in her hand.

"Keep it," said Raban, gravely; "no one has more right to it than you." Then they were all silent.

Dolly wondered why Rhoda had a right to the cross, but she did not ask.

Raban turned still more hard and more sad as the old memories assailed him suddenly from every side. Here was the past living over again. Though he might have softened to Lady Sarah, he now hardened to himself; and, as it often happens, the self-inflicted pain he felt seemed reflected in his manner towards the girls.

"I know you both now," he said, gravely, standing up. "Good-night; will you say good-bye to your aunt for me."

He did not offer to shake hands; it was Dolly who put out hers. He was very stiff, and yet there was a humble look in his pale face and dark eyes that Dolly could not forget. She seemed to remember it after he was gone.

Lady Sarah came in only a minute after Frank had left. She looked disappointed.

"I have just met him in the hall," she said.

"Is he gone?" said Dolly. "Aunt Sarah, he is still very unhappy."

A few minutes afterwards Rhoda said what a pity that Mr. Raban was gone, when she saw how smartly the tea-table was set out, how the silver candlesticks were lighted, and some of the good old wine that George liked sparkling in the decanter. Dolly felt as if Mr. Raban was more disagreeable than ever for giving so much trouble for nothing. Rhoda was very much interested in Lady Sarah's visitor, and asked Dolly many more questions when they were alone upstairs. She had been ill, and was staying at Church House to get well in quiet and away from the schoolboys.

"Of course one can't ever like him," Dolly said, "but one is very sorry for him. Good-night, Rhoda."

"No, I don't like her," said Raban to himself; and he thought of Dolly all the way home. Her face haunted him. He dined at his club, and drove to the shabby station in Bishopsgate. He seemed to see her still as he waited for his train, stamping by the station fire, and by degrees that bitter vision of the past vanished away and the present remained. Dolly's face seemed to float along before him all the way back as the second-class carriage shook and jolted through the night, out beyond London fog into a region of starlit plains and distant glimmering lights. Vision and visionary travelled on together, until at last the train slackened its thunder and stopped. A few late Cambridge lights shone in the distance. It was past midnight. When Raban, walking through the familiar byways, reached his college-gates, he found them closed and barred; one gas-lamp flared—a garish light of to-day shining on the ancient carved stones and gabions of the past. A sleepy porter let him in, and as he walked across the dark court he looked up and saw here and there a light burning in a window, and then some far-away college-clock clanged the half-hour, then another, and another, and then their own clock overhead, loud and stunning. He reached his own staircase at last and opened the oak door. Before going in, Raban looked up through the staircase-window at George Vanborough's rooms, which happened to be opposite his own. They were brilliantly illuminated, and the rays streamed out and lighted up many a deep lintel and sleeping-window.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITTLE BROTHER AND LITTLE SISTER.

As the actors pass across the stage of life and play their parts in its great drama, it is not difficult at the outset to docket them for the most part "a lawyer," "a speculator," "an amiable person," "an intelligent, prosy man," "a parson," &c. ; but after watching the piece a little (on this all-the-world stage it is not the play that ends, but the actors and speculators that come and go), we begin to see, that although some of the performers may be suited to their parts, there are others whose characters are not so well cast to the piece—Robert Henley, for instance, who is not quite in his element as a very young man. But every one is in earnest in a certain fashion upon this life-stage, and that is why we find the actors presently beginning to play their own characters, instead of those which they are supposed to represent—to the great confusion, very often, of the drama itself. We have all read of a locksmith who had to act the part of a king ; of a nephew who tried to wear his uncle's cocked hat ; of a king who proclaimed himself a god ; and of the confusion that ensued ; and it is the same in private as in public life, where people are set to work experiments in love, money, sermon, hay, or law-making, with more or less aptitude for the exercise—what a strange jumble it is ! Here is the lawyer making love to his client, instead of writing her will ; the lover playing on the piano while his mistress is expecting him ; the farmer, while his crops are spoiling, pondering on the theory of original sin. Among women, too, we find wives, mothers, daughters, and even professed aunts and nieces, all with their parts reversed by the unkind freaks of fate. Some get on pretty well, some break down utterly. The higher natures, acting from a wider conception of life, will do their best to do justice to the character, uncongenial though it may be, which happens to be assigned to them. Perhaps they may flag now and then, specially towards the middle of the performance ; but by degrees they come to hear the music of "duty done." And duty is music, though it may be a hard sort of fugue, and difficult to practise—one too hard, alas, for our poor George as yet to master. Henley, to be sure, accomplished his ambitions ; but then it was only a one-fingered scale that he attempted.

Dolly's was easy music in those early days of her life : at home or in Old Street the girl herself and her surroundings were in a perfect harmony. Dolly's life was a melody played to an accompaniment of loving tones and tender words among the tranquil traditions of the old house and the old ivy-grown suburb in which it stood. Rhoda used to wonder why people cared so much for Dolly, who was so happy, who never sacrificed herself, but did as she liked, and won all hearts to her, even Robert Henley's, thought Rhoda with a sigh. As for Dolly, she never thought about her happiness, though Rhoda did. The girl's life sped on peacefully among the people who loved her. She knew she meant so well

that it had not yet occurred to her that she might make mistakes in life and fail, and be sorry some day like other folks. Rhoda, comparing her own little back-garret life in the noisy Morgan household with her friend's, used to think that everybody and everything united to spoil her. Dolly was undoubtedly Dorothea Regina—ruler of the household—a benevolent tyrant. The province of the teapot was hers—the fortress of the store-room. She had her latch-key; her aunt, Lady Sarah, spoilt her in everything. Old Marker and George were the only people who ever ventured to oppose her. When they did so, Dolly gave in instantly with a smile and a sweet grace that was specially her own. She was a weak-minded, somewhat impetuous, and self-diffident person in reality; though as yet she did not know what she was. In looks she could see a tall and stately maiden, with a sweet, round, sleepy face, reflected in the glass, and she took herself for granted at the loving valuation of those about her, as people, both old and young, are apt to do.

Dolly was one of those persons who travel on eagerly by starts, and then sit down to rest. Notwithstanding her impetuous, youthful manner, she was full of humility and diffidence, and often from very shyness and sincerity she would seem rude and indignant when she was half-frightened at her own vehemence; then came passionate self-reproach, how passionate none can tell but those who, like Dolly Vanborough, seem to have many selves and many impulses, all warring with one another. There are two great classes of women—those who minister, and those who are taken care of by others; and the born care-takers and workers are apt to chafe in early life, before people will recognize their right to do. Something is wrong, tempers go wrong, hearts beat passionately, boil over, ache for nothing at all; they want to comfort people, to live, to love, to come and go, to feel they are at work. It may be wholesome discipline for such natures to live for years in a kingdom of education of shadows and rules. They may practise their self-denial on the keys of the piano, they may translate their hearts' interest into German exercises and back into English again; but that is poor work, and so far the upper classes pay a cruel penalty unknown to girls of a humbler birth. And so time goes on. For some a natural explanation comes to all their nameless difficulties. Others find one sooner or later, or, as years go on, the bright edge of impatient youth wears off. Raban once called Dolly a beautiful sour apple. Beautiful apples want time and sunshine to ripen and become sweet. If Dolly blamed others, she did not spare herself; but she was much beloved, and, as I have said, she meant so well that she could not help trusting in herself.

So Dolly could not help believing in herself for the present through the loving faith of those in whom she trusted. She took it for granted she was all they wished, and that she ought to be. When the bitter awakening came, she thought she must have been dreaming, and that she had had two lives in her one life. Something of Dolly's life was written in her face, in her clear, happy eyes, in her dark and troubled brow. Even as a girl, people

used to say that she had always different faces, and so she had for the multitude ; but for those who loved her it was always the same true, trusting look, more or less worn as time went on, but still the same. She had a peculiar, sudden, sweet smile, that went to the very heart of the lonely old aunt, who saw it often. Dolly never had the training of repression, and perhaps that is why, when it fell upon her in later life, the lesson seemed so hard. She was not brilliant. She could not *say* things like George. She was not witty. Though she loved to be busy, and to accomplish, Dolly could not do things like Rhoda—clearly, quickly, completely. But how many stupid people there are who have a touch of genius about them. It would be hard to say in what it consists. They may be dull, slow, cross at times, ill-informed, but you feel there is something that outweighs dulness, crossness, want of information.

Dorothy Vanborough had a little genius in her, though she was apt to look stupid and sulky and indifferent when she did not feel at her ease. Sometimes, when reproved for this, she would stand gaping with her grey eyes, and looking so oddly like her aunt Sarah that Mrs. Palmer, when she came home would lose all patience with her. There was no knowing exactly what she was, her mother used to say. One day straight as an arrow—bright, determined ; another day, grey and stiff, and almost ugly and high-shouldered. "If Dolly had been more taking," said Mrs. Palmer, judging by the light of her own two marriages, "she might have allowed herself these quirks and fancies ; but as it was, it was a pity." Her mother declared that she did it on purpose.

Did she do it on purpose ? In early life she didn't care a bit what people thought of her. In this she was a little unwomanly, perhaps, but unwomanly in the best and noblest sense. When with time those mysterious other selves came upon her that we meet as we travel along the road, bewildering her and pointing with all their different experiences, she ceased to judge either herself or others as severely ; she loved faith and truth, and hated meanness and dissimulation as much as ever. Only, being a woman too honest to deceive herself, she found she could no longer apply the precepts that she had used once to her satisfaction. To hate the devil and all his works is one thing, but to say who is the devil and which are his works is another.

As for George Vanborough, his temper was alternately uproarious and melancholy : there was some incongruity in his nature that chafed and irritated him. He had abilities, but strange and cross-grained ones, of no use in an examination for instance. He could invent theories, but somehow he never got at the facts ; he was rapid in conclusion, too rapid for poor Dolly, who was expected to follow him wherever he went, and who was sometimes hard put to it, for, unlike George, her convictions were slower than her sympathies.

A great many people seem to miss their vocations because their bodies do not happen to fit their souls. This is one of the advantages of

middle age : people have got used to their bodies and to their faults ; they know how to use them, to spare them, and they do not expect too much. George was at war with himself, poor fellow : by turns ascetic and self-indulgent, morbid, and over-confident. It is difficult to docket such a character, made up of all sorts of little bits collected from one and another ancestor ; of materials warring against each other, as we have read in Mr. Darwin.

George's rooms at Cambridge were very small, and looked out across the green quadrangle at All Saints. Among other instincts, he had inherited that of weaving his nest with photographs and old china, and lining it comfortably from Church House. There were papers and music-books, tankards (most of them with inscriptions), and a divining crystal. The old windows were deep and ivy-grown : at night they would often be cheerfully lighted up. "Far too often," say George's counsellors.

"I should like to entertain well enough," says Henley, with a wave of the hand, "but I can't afford it prudently. Bills have a knack of running up, particularly when they are not paid," the young man remarks, with great originality, "and then one can't always meet them."

George only answers by a scowl from his little ferret eyes. "You can pay your own bills twice over if you like," he grunts out impatiently ; "mine don't concern you."

Robert said no more ; he had done his part, and he felt he could now face Dolly and poor Lady Sarah of the bleeding purse with a clear conscience ; but he could not help remembering with some satisfaction two neatly tied-up bundles of bills lying with a cheque-book in his despatch-box at home. He was just going when there came a knock at the door, and a pale man with a red beard walked in and shook hands with George, then somewhat hesitatingly with his companion, and finally sat down in George's three-sided chair.

Need I say that this was Raban, who had come to recommend a tutor to George. Was it to George or to Dorothea that Raban was so anxious to recommend a tutor ?

George shrugged his shoulders, and said, "I don't know ; I have got a theory of my own. I think I shall not take a coach."

Henley delayed a moment. "I am glad you agree with me," he said. "I also have been speaking to my cousin on the subject."

Raban bowed in the shy way peculiar to him. You never could tell if he was only shy or repelled by your advances.

"You and I have found the advantage of a good coach all our lives," the other continued, with a subdued air of modest triumph. It seemed to say, "You will be glad to know that I am one of the most rising men of the University ;" and at the same time Robert looked down apologetically at poor scowling George, who was anything but rising, poor fellow, and well up to his knees in the slough of despond. Nor was it destined that Robert Henley was to be the man to pull him out. Although he had

walked over from St. Thomas to do so, he walked back again without having effected his purpose.

"I did not know, till your sister told me, that Mr. Henley was your cousin," said Raban, as Robert left the room.

"Didn't you?" said George. "I suppose you did not see any likeness in me to that grenadier with the cameo nose?" and, turning his back abruptly upon Raban, he began strumming Yankee-doodle on the piano, standing as he played, and putting in a quantity of pretty modulations. It was only to show off; but Raban, who was easily repelled, might have been tempted to follow Henley downstairs if he had not caught sight of a photograph of a girl with circling eyes in some strange old-fashioned dress, with a lantern in her hand. It was the work of a well-known amateur, who has the gift of seizing expression as it flies, and giving you a breathing friend, instead of the image of an image. But it was in vain the young professor stayed on, in vain that he came time after time trying to make friends with young Vanborough and to urge him to work. He once went so far as to write a warning letter to Lady Sarah. It did no good, and only made Dolly angry. At Christmas, George wrote that he had not passed, and would be home on the 23rd. He did not add that he had been obliged to sign some bills before he could get away.

George came home: with or without his laurels, he was sure of an ovation. Dolly, by her extra loving welcome, only showed her disappointment at his want of success.

The fatted calf was killed, and the bottle of good wine was opened. "Old Sam insisted on it," said Lady Sarah, who had got into a way of taking shelter behind old Sam when she found herself relenting. It was impossible not to relent when Dolly, hearing the cab-wheels, came with a scream of delight flying down the staircase from George's room, where she had been busy making ready. A great gust of cold wind burst into the hall with the open door, by which George was standing, with his bag, a little fussy and a little shy; but Dolly's glad cry of welcome and loving arms were there to reassure him.

"Shut the door," said Dolly; "the wind will blow us away. Have you paid your cab?" As she spoke the horse was turning round upon its haunches, and the cab was driving off, and a pale face looked out for an instant.

"It's no matter," said George, pushing to the door. "Raban brought me. He is going on to dine somewhere near."

"Horrid man!" said Dolly. "Come, George, and see Aunt Sarah. She is in the drawing-room."

Lady Sarah looked at George very gravely over her knitting, and her needles began to tremble a little.

"What do you wish me to say, George? That you failed because you couldn't or because you wouldn't try?"

"Some one must fail," said George.

"It is not fair upon me," said Lady Sarah, "that you should be the one. No, Dolly, I am not at all unkind."

I have said very little of the changes and economies that had been made at Church House, they affected Lady Sarah and Dolly so little ; but when George came home, even in disgrace, a certain difference was made in the still ways of the house. Old Sam's niece, Eliza Twells, stayed all day, and was transformed into a smiling abigail, not a little pleased with her promotion. One of Lady Sarah's old grey gowns was bestowed upon her. A cap and ribbons were concocted by Dolly ; the ribbons were for ever fluttering in and out of the sitting-room, and up and down the passages. There was a sound of voices now, a show of life. Dolly could not talk to herself all through the long months when George was away ; but when she had him safe in his little room again the duet was unceasing.

Eliza Twells down below in the pan-decorated kitchen, in all the excitement of her new dignities, kept the ball going. You could hear old Sam's chuckles all the way upstairs, and the maiden's loud, croaking, cheerful voice.

"It's like a saw-mill," said George ; "but what is that ?"

"That is Eliza laughing," said Dorothea, laughing herself ; "and there is dear old Marker scolding. Oh ! George, how nice it is to have you home again ;" and then, as most happy vibrations bring a sadder aftertone, Dolly sighed and stopped short.

"Disgrace is hard to bear," said George, moodily.

"Disgrace ! What do you mean ?" wondered Dolly, who had been thinking of something quite apart from those unlucky examinations—something that was not much, and yet she would have found it hard to put her thought into words. For how much there is that is not in words, that never happens quite, that is never realized altogether ; and yet it is as much part of our life as anything else.

CHAPTER XIV.

RAG DOLLS.

THESE were days not to be forgotten by Dolly or by her aunt. Don't we all know how life runs in certain grooves, following phases of one sort or another ? How dreams of coming trouble haunt us vaguely all through a night ; or, again, is it hope that dawns silently from afar to lighten our hearts and to make sweet visions for us before we awake to the heat of the day.

It was all tranquil progress from day to day. Raban came to see them once or twice while George was away. It seemed all peace and silence during those years in the old house, where the two women lived so quietly each their own life, thinking their own thoughts. Rumours came now and then of Mrs. Palmer's return ; but this had been put off so often, from one reason or another, that Dolly had almost ceased to dwell

upon it. She had settled down to her daily occupations. John Morgan had set her to work in one of his districts. She used to teach in the Sunday-school, help her aunt in a hundred ways. This eventful spring she went into Yorkshire with Marker and a couple of new gowns on a visit to her uncle, Sir Thomas Henley, at Smokethwayte. She enjoyed herself extremely, and liked her uncle and the girls very much. Her aunt was not very kind; "at least, not so kind as I'm used to," said Dolly afterwards. They had gone for long walks across the moors; they had ridden for twenty miles one day. She had seen her mother's picture, and slept in the room that used to be hers when she was a girl, and her cousin Norah had taken her about; but her aunt Henley was certainly very cross and always saying uncomfortable things, and she was very glad to be home again, and didn't want to go away for years and years. Robert Henley had been there for a couple of days, and had come up to town with her. Jonah Henley was a very kind, stupid boy, not at all like Robert. He was very friendly to Dolly, and used to confide in her. He had made his mother very angry by insisting upon going into the Guards.

"She asked my advice," said Dolly. "She wanted to know if I didn't think it a foolish, idle sort of life."

"And what did you say?" said Lady Sarah.

"I said that it might be so for some people who were clever and thoughtful, but that he seemed to have no interests at all, and never opened a book."

"My dear child," cried Lady Sarah, "no wonder Lady Henley was annoyed!"

"Oh, dear me! I am so very sorry," cries Dolly, penitently, as she walked along. They were going along one of the narrow alleys leading to the Square.

Day after day Lady Sarah, used to leave home and trudge off with her basket and her well-known shabby cloak—it was warm and green like the heart that beat under it—from house to house, in and out, round and about the narrow little Kensington streets. The parents who had tried to impose upon her at first, soon found that she had little sympathy for pathetic attitudes, and that her quick tongue paid them back in their own coin. They bore no malice. Poor people only really respect those who know them as they are, and whose sympathy is personal and not ideal. Lady Sarah's was genuine sympathy; she knew her flock by name, and she spared no trouble to help those who were trying to help themselves. The children would come up shyly when they saw the straight, scant figure coming along, and look into her face. Sometimes the basket would open and red apples would come out—shining red apples in the dirty little back streets and bye-lanes behind Kensington Square. Once Robert Henley, walking to Church House across some back way, came upon his aunt sitting on an old chair on the step of a rag-shop with a little circle of children round her, and Dolly standing beside her, straight and upright, with an apple in her hand. Over her head

swung the legless form of a rag doll, twirling in the wind. On one side of the door was some rhymed doggerel about "Come, cookey, come," and bring "your bones," plastered up against the wall. Lady Sarah, on the step, seemed dispensing bounties from her bag to half-a-dozen little clamorous, half-fledged creatures.

"My dear aunt Sarah, what does this mean?" said Robert, trying to laugh, but looking very uncomfortable.

"I was so tired, Robert, I could not get home without resting," said Lady Sarah, "and Mr. Wilkins kindly brought me out a chair. These are some of my Sunday-school children, and Dolly and I were giving them a treat."

"But really this is scarcely the place to—— If any one were to pass—if—— Run away, run away, run away," said Mr. Henley affably to the children, who were all closing in in a ragged phalanx and gazing admiringly at his trousers. "I'll get you a cab directly," said the young man, looking up and down. "I came this short cut, but I had no idea——"

"There are no cabs anywhere down here," said Dolly, laughing. "This is Aunt Sarah's district; that is her soup-kitchen." And Dolly pointed up a dismal street with some flapping washing lines on one side. It looked all empty and deserted, except that two women were standing in the doorways of their queer old huddled-up houses. A little further off came a branch street, a blank wall, and some old Queen Anne railings and doorways leading into Kensington Square.

"Good-by, little Betty," said Lady Sarah, getting up from her old straw chair, and smiling.

She was amused by the young man's unaffected dismay. Philanthropy was quite in Henley's line, but that was, Robert thought, a very different thing from familiarity.

"Now then, Betty, where's your curtséy?" says Dolly; "and Mick, sir!"

Mick grinned, and pulled at one of his horrible little wisps of hair. The children seemed fascinated by the "gentleman." They were used to the ladies, and, in fact, accustomed to be very rude to Dolly, although she was so severe.

"If you will give me an arm, Robert," said Lady Sarah, "and if you are not ashamed to be seen with me——"

"My dear Lady Sarah!" said Robert, hastily, offering his arm.

"Now, children, be off," says Dolly.

"Please, sir, won't you give us 'napeny?" said Mick, hopping along with his little deft, bare feet.

"Go away,—for shame, Mick!" cried Dolly again, while Henley impatiently threw some coppers into the road, after which all the children set off scrambling in an instant. "Oh, Robert, you shouldn't have done that," cried Dolly, rushing back to superintend the fair division of kicks and halfpence.

Robert waited for her for a moment, and looked at her as she stood straight and tall in her long grey cloak, with a little struggling heap at her feet of legs and rags and squeaks and contortions. The old Queen Anne railings of the corner house, and the dim street winding into rags, made a background to this picture of modern times: an old slatternly woman in a night-cap came to her help from one of the neighbouring doorways, and seizing one of the children out of the heap, gave it a cuff and dragged it away. Dolly had lifted Mick off the back of a smaller child—the crisis was over.

"Here she comes," said Lady Sarah, in no way discomposed.

Robert was extremely discomposed. He hated to see Dolly among such sights and surroundings. He tried to speak calmly as they walked on, but his voice sounded a little cracked.

"Surely," he said, "this is too much for you at times. Do you go very often?"

"Nearly every day, Robert," said Dorothea. "You see what order I have got the children into."

She was laughing again, and Henley, as usual, was serious.

"Of course I cannot judge," said he, "not knowing what state they were in originally." Then he added, gravely turning to Lady Sarah, "Don't you somehow think that Dolly is very young to be mixed up with a—rag-shops and wickedness?"

"Dolly is young," said her aunt, not over pleased; "but she is very prudent, and I am not afraid of her pawning her clothes and taking to drink."

"My dear aunt, you don't suppose I ever thought of such a possibility," Robert exclaimed. "Only ladies do not always consider things from our point of view, and I feel in a certain degree responsible and bound to you as your nearest male protector (take care—here is a step). I should not like other people, who might not know Dolly as we do, to imagine that she was accustomed already to——"

"My dear Robert," said Lady Sarah, "Dolly has got an aunt and a brother to take care of her; do you suppose that we would let her do anything that we thought might hurt her in other people's opinion? Dolly, here is Robert horrified at the examples to which you are exposed. He feels he ought to interfere."

"You won't understand me," said Robert, keeping his temper very good-naturedly. "Of course I can't help taking an interest in my relations."

"Thank you, Robert," said Dolly, smiling and blushing.

Their eyes met for an instant, and Robert looked better pleased. It was a bright delightful spring morning. All the windows were shining in the old square, there was a holiday thrill in the air, a sound of life, dogs barking, people stirring and coming out of their hiding-places, animals and birds exulting.

Dolly used to get almost tipsy upon sunshine. The weather is as

much part of some people's lives as the minor events which happen to them. She walked along by the other two, diverging a little as they travelled along, the elder woman's bent figure beating time with quick fluttering footsteps to the young man's even stride. Dolly liked Robert to be nice to her aunt, and was not a little pleased when he approved of herself. She was a little afraid of him. She felt that beneath that calm manner there were many secrets that she had not yet fathomed. She knew how good he was, how he never got into debt. Ah me! how she wished George would take pattern by him. Dolly and Rhoda had sometimes talked Robert over. They gave him credit for great experience, a deep knowledge of the world (he dined out continually when he was in town), and they also gave him full credit for his handsome, thoughtful face, his tall commanding figure. You cannot but respect a man of six foot high.

So they reached the doorway at last. The ivy was all glistening in the sunshine, and as they rang the bell they heard the sound of Minette's bark in the garden, and then came some music, some brilliant pianoforte-playing, which sounded clear and ringing as it overflowed the garden-wall and streamed out into the lane.

"Listen! Who can that be playing?" cries Dolly, brightening up still brighter, and listening with her face against the ivy.

"George," says Robert. "Has George come up again?"

"It's the overture to the *Freischütz*," says Dolly, conclusively; "it is George."

And when old Sam shuffled up at last to open the door, he announced, grinning, that "Mr. Garge had come, and was playing the peanner in the drawing-room."

At the same moment, through the iron gate, they saw a figure advancing to meet them from the garden, with Gumbo caracolling in advance.

"Why, there is Rhoda in the garden," cries Dolly. "Robert, you go to her. I must go to George."

A Tour in North-East Anatolia.*

WHILE many more distant, though certainly not more interesting, regions are made the subjects of frequent and painstaking exploration, the eastern half of Asia Minor has, so far as details are concerned, remained a comparatively virgin country to European research. The western and southern coasts of the Anatolian peninsula, the Troad, the Seven Cities, and what adjoins them, have, indeed, met with better favour; but the great valley of the Halys, the Pontic territory, and the highlands where the Euphrates has birth, and through which it runs its early course, are seldom visited, and more seldom studied. Blanks in Kiepert's own maps bear witness to the imperfect knowledge of even the geographical outlines; while the archaeological, naturalistic, and ethnical treasures of these lands may be said to be yet almost untouched in their varied richness. Still, in each and all of these respects, few countries would better repay the labours of the traveller; and the slight difficulties of the road are such as ought to stimulate the ardour of the traveller, not to extinguish it.

Merely as specimens of what may here be looked for, not as by any means exhaustive notices, I purpose in this paper briefly recapitulating some observations made by myself during part of a long tour on duty in the interior a year and a half ago. The subjects thus brought forward are primarily geological in their character; but, while I attempt to illustrate them, I shall have occasion to touch on other topics connected with them, and of more varied interest.

The two principle points, however, to which my attention, casually attracted at first, was afterwards more seriously given, are, firstly, the vestiges of the so-called glacial period in this part of Asia Minor; and secondly, the volcanic phenomena of remote date displayed within this same region. Both may, I trust, be at some future period more thoroughly examined and described by observers more competent than myself to the task.

The starting-point of my route was the port of Trebizond on the Black Sea; and the direction which I took lay south by east for about 130 miles to the town of Erzingian on the Upper Euphrates; after that I turned west by north for about eighty miles more to the mining, or rather the mineral, district of Kara-Hisar. Thence I travelled much further before my return to Trebizond; but it was in the portion of the tour just specified that I found the most notable traces of either action, glacial and volcanic.

* This paper was, in substance, read at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, March 25, 1872.

To begin with the former. It might, indeed, have been fairly anticipated that, during the epoch when the Polar ice-cap and its outlying glaciers extended so far as we know they then did, both in Europe and in North America, they could hardly have failed to affect, in some measure, the mountain-chains and elevated plateaus of Asia Minor, particularly on its northern side. However, I must confess that no idea of looking for them had ever previously occurred to me, till they obtruded themselves in unmistakable evidence on my observation.

It is, then, the 1st of July, 1870; and we have set out from Trebizond, a small band of five horsemen: namely, a Turkish "zabteeyah," or mounted policeman, a Circassian servant, a negro groom, a Turkoman guide, and myself. But as the very groundless apprehension of personal danger acts sometimes as a deterrent from Anatolian travelling, I may as well state, for the better re-assurance of timid minds, that the mounted guard just mentioned was mainly, or, indeed, wholly, for honour's sake, and for convenience of service by the road-side; not to protect against possible brigands or fanatics. Both of these are, indeed, scarce articles in Eastern Turkey, though a few are occasionally imported into its western districts from the happy soil of neighbouring Greece, where there is a superabundance of such products. Only as everybody hereabouts is armed, we are so too; at least, my servants are, for to them I generally commit my pistols till wanted for actual use.

Of bag and baggage neither master nor men have more than what the horses we are mounted on can comfortably carry besides ourselves; since Turkish hospitality, no vain name, will amply provide us with food, bedding, and every similar requisite as we go along.

Leaving the town, we skirt the sea-shore a little way, and soon arrive at the opening of the valley by which the great caravan road passes to the interior, and even on to Persia, if you choose to travel so far. Down this valley flows the Pyxartes of classic times, now known as Deyermend-Dereh, or the "stream of mills," from the numerous constructions of that kind along its banks. It is easily fordable for ten months of the year, even at its deepest points; and carries down to the Black Sea just enough of mud and small pebbles to form a low bar at its mouth, nothing more.

It was not always thus with the Pyxartes. For as we go inland up the highway, at about a quarter of a mile distant from the present beach, we find that the valley is crossed in two-thirds of its width by an enormous bar, from fifty to sixty feet in total height, consisting of loose stones, all smooth, and mostly oval in shape; some of very considerable size. Examining these stones, I notice that they do not belong to the neighbouring rocks, which are wholly volcanic in character, but to the Jurassic and Plutonic formations of the mountain-chain further south, where the river has its origin. But, from their dimensions and quantity, it is evident that they must have been brought hither by a volume of water ten or twenty times greater than that which the Pyxartes, even in its spring-floods, can now supply.

Whence, then, was such a water-supply derived? Not from a wider extent of hill-drainage; for the general features of the mountain-range behind have undergone no appreciable change within a period so comparatively recent as that implied by this stone heap. Nor from more abundant forests; for the sides of the hills are still everywhere clothed, as of old, by dense woods, the ornament of the scenery, and the bane of the climate. Remains, that the only possible origin of so mighty a stream must have been from a mass of ice and snow far exceeding that which is now deposited during the winter months on the peaks; and it was the periodical melting of this mass that must have given the stream the torrential character, to which these huge stones rolled and heaped up before us bear evidence.

A further proof of this is afforded by the erosions carried many feet high in the rocks on either side of the valley, the breadth of which is now out of all proportion with the scanty stream that meanders down its centre. Lastly, we may remark that, during the interval elapsed from the glacial period to our own, the coast itself must have been elevated some eight or ten feet; that being the height by which the base of what was once the river-bar exceeds the actual level of the sea-shore.

The whole of that day and the next are employed by us in winding up the steep sides of the Kolat-Dagh, as the coast range, which might not improperly be denominated the Anti-Caucasus, is here called. Gradually we rise above the zone of the golden *Azalea Pontica*, the beauty and luxuriance of which, in this its very home, can hardly be described; at one thousand feet of elevation it begins to give place to the *rhododendron*, which attains its perfection in these latitudes somewhat short of two thousand feet. The trees of the lower coast, walnut, plane, alder, and maple, yield in their turn as we advance to oak, beech, and ash, with a few pines; then, at four thousand feet, the beech reigns almost alone; it is succeeded by fir, this last attaining a range of six thousand feet, or near it. Then the wood ceases altogether, and up we go by rapid slopes clothed with short grass, and by stony ledges, where no animal but a goat or a Turkish horse could find secure footing; till, at about eight thousand feet, even the grass begins to fail us, and our scramble leads across the surface pebbles of the weather-decomposed rock. At this height patches of snow too appear in sheltered spots, even on this 2nd of July, but before the month is over all these will have melted away.

We are now among the loftiest ridges of the chain. From a distance of six or seven miles from the coast inwards the strata are *Jurassic*, with one grand exception, which I will specify further on; granite, however, occasionally crops through the higher ledges, where snow covers all from November till the latter part of April, but wholly disappears before the middle of August at latest. But the rounded dome-like tops and smoothed-off slopes above, ending often in abrupt precipices and shattered rocks half-way down, give evidence that a far greater quantity of snow was once heaped up here; and display the proportionate effects of the annual thaws

of that period. Of moraines, however, there are no distinct traces on this steep northern side ; and, partly from the immediate proximity of the sea, partly owing to the narrowness of the crowning mountain-ridge itself, it is probable that no permanent glaciers of any great extent ever existed here : we shall find their vestiges further inland.

On the morning of the third day we arrive at the crest itself of Kolat-Dagh, a knife-like wall of rock. Before us rises, in semblance of the top-most tier in an amphitheatre, a long snow-barrier, about one hundred yards in breadth, dazzling white against the dark violet of the sky. But the snow is not deep, nor does it last long enough to receive the accessions of a second winter. We thread it by a narrow staircase of a pass, and then stand on the very summit of the glittering wall : here my aneroid indicates 9,600 feet above the sea-level.

The view from this point surpasses in comprehensive grandeur almost any that it has been my fortune to witness elsewhere. Beneath us to the south lies what seems a storm-tossed ocean of ridge and crag, where the deep, and, to the eye, fathomless rifts are filled with the brightest green of rich cultivation or virgin forest : beyond this broken region stretches away, fore-shortened in perspective, a high undulating plateau ; and this, again, is bounded by a second mountain-range, equal to, or exceeding in height, that upon which we ourselves stand. This second chain is the Kepan-Dagh, the water-shed that divides the streams flowing northward into the Black Sea from the Euphrates, the Tigris, and their tributaries. It is fifty or sixty miles distant from us, in a direct line ; yet through its rounded gaps we catch glimpses of picturesque and jagged summits still further south ; these belong to the volcanic group of Darseem, through which the Euphrates finds its tortuous way ; the loftiest peaks are said to reach 11,000 feet, and, at this time of year, are streaked and ribbed with snow.

To the right our view extends over a chaos of ravine and forest for about thirty miles, till it is closed in by the wild dark masses of Giaour-Dagh, and Sheeran-Dagh of lawless fame ; both these mountain groups form part of the volcanic formation of the Kara-Hisar or Black-Castle district, which we are soon to visit. On the left runs the glorious Anti-Caucasus range, wood, precipice, and snow, rising higher and higher, to an altitude of 12,000 feet in the Shoohat mountains, near the Russo-Caucasian frontier. Behind us the horizon is lost in the haze, the steam of the Black Sea.

Regretfully we descend the southern slope, and plunge deeper and deeper into the labyrinth of rock and forest, with green sward-strips between, and many small but well-to-do villages nestling here and there, and countless watercourses, full and sparkling, all making their way for the Kharshoot valley, and so descending through a great gap westwards in the Kolat-Dagh itself, to the Black Sea, near Terabolous, or Tripoli. Here, too, are flowers of every shape and hue, birds of every note and feather ; with a superabundance of animal and vegetable life that might well

rejoice the heart of a naturalist or a botanist, did such ever visit these lands.

We now turn south-west, and about sunset enter the Kharshoot valley—the general outlet of the waters of these regions—at a height of 3,800 feet above the sea, near the rich but now unworked silver-mines of Gumesh-Khanch. Next day (July 4) we ascended the valley, passing through miles of orchard and garden, till, where the barometer indicates 5,200 feet, we quitted the Kharshoot, and turned off to the right up a wild gorge styled Ketcheh-Derèh, or “goats’ ravine,” from the wild goats that abound here, going to the great plateau of Kelkeet, and serving as high-road, or rather path, to Erzinghian.

The rock on either side of Ketcheh-Derèh is limestone, worn by rain and weather into the most fanciful shapes, that mimic battlemented walls and towered castles, till close attention is needed to detect that all these appearances are the work, not of art, but nature. However, our notice is soon attracted by an object of greater interest before us.

For here, at the height of 5,600 feet, where the gorge widens out and spreads fanlike up into the plateau, whence it takes its origin, we come upon a large moraine, composed of tumbled blocks, irregular in their shape and size. The height of the moraine itself is, where greatest, about twenty-five feet; its abrupt termination comes down close upon the road itself: the materials are of the limestone around. We skirted it for a quarter of a mile, going rapidly upwards, till, at the height of about 6,200 feet, the stone ridge forks off into two smaller ones, both of which lose themselves among the slopes of the plateau on our right.

We continue our journey; and having at last surmounted the long but gradual ascent known as Yelish-Dagh, we enter on the Kelkeet table-land itself: its elevation here is 6,800 feet. Before us opens out a scene of a character totally different from what we have left behind. It is a wide undulating ground, beneath limestone, and above thinly covered with grass; it presents several hill-like eminences, some of which rise more than a thousand feet higher than the general surface, but all worn and rounded off into the form called by the French “*moutonnée*,” after the manner peculiar to rocks that have been long covered by glacier. Everywhere by the roadside I observe detached blocks of stone, some very large, others small, scattered as by chance, and many of them scored with the unmistakable grooves and notches of ice action: indeed such abound over the entire surface of the plateau wherever it is crossed.

On the second day of our route across the table-land we enter a wide depression, having on its left a lofty mounded ridge, called the Godilah Tash; and here I notice a second moraine, smaller than the first one, descending into the hollow from the mountain at its side. Its total length seemed to me not to exceed the sixth of a mile.

In the actual state of the Asiatic climate snow lies here for five months out of the twelve: even in summer the air is cold and the cultivation scanty. Judging from the traces left, I should think that during the

glacial period the limit of perpetual congelation must have been between 5,000 and 6,000 feet, while some of the glaciers probably stretched downwards to a much lower level. The table-land is backed throughout by the central Anatolian water-shed, and its streams all find their way northward to the Black Sea.

Our road traverses this region diagonally between south and west, till on the third day, the sixth after leaving Trebizond, we enter the mountainous region that lies behind and terminates the table-land. It bears various names : here, where we now have to cross it, they call it Kesheesh-Dagh ; eastward it is Kepan-Dagh ; further east yet Kop-Dagh ; and so on, according to the usage of the Turks, who, unlike the Arabs, seem incapable of generalizing one entire mountain chain by a common name. The height of the pass itself is only 8,200 feet ; but some neighbouring summits attain 2,000 more. Though it lies a full degree more to the south than the Kolat range, its inland position, as well as its greater breadth, enables it to retain more snow, and for a longer time, but not enough to accumulate from year to year. Here the formation changes, becoming mixed with gniess, hornblende, and quartz ; the outer lines of the mountain are rounded and smoothed away ; it is, in fact, only a loftier table-land than the rest.

However, on the southern side the descent is rapid, indeed precipitous. Far below there spreads a long and wide plain, through which the Euphrates, scarcely more than a hundred yards in breadth at this part of its course, wanders along from east to west. Opposite to us, across the valley, rises the Darseem mountains, abrupt and lofty ; they belong to the central and semi-active volcanic belt that traverses Asia Minor in its whole length, and part of Persia too, from Smyrna to Demavend.

But as I stand on the crest of Kesheesh-Dagh, I notice that the lovely valley beneath, with its villages, gardens, apricot groves, and rich cultivation, is by far too wide for the Euphrates of our time,—a shallow and slender stream, inadequate to its former bed. I remark, too, the gigantic rifts down the southern side of the mountain, and the great piled-up masses of loose fragments abutting abruptly on the plain,—all appearances indicative of snow and thaw in proportions now unknown to these heights, and which cannot be explained or accounted for in the modern climatic conditions of the land.

Such are the principal phenomena connected with the glacial period, as observed by myself during my journey of 1870 in this part of Asia Minor. But it is proper to add that they are, so far as I can discover, repeated all along the entire zone of table-land, from longitude 36° to 42° , and, possibly, further. When, after a week's stay at Erzinghian, I left it to travel north-westward in the direction of Kara-Hisar, thus recrossing the Kelkeet plateau on another line, I met with a similar class of appearances, scratched stones, and the vestiges of moraines. In particular, at the entrance of the Cherdakh Pass, that leads out of the western extremity of the Erzinghian valley, going up to a height of 8,100 feet, the road skirts

a huge stone drift; its lower extremity comes down to 4,900 feet. I tracked its continuation for about 1,000 feet higher up, and then lost it among the slopes.

Of the antiquities contained in Erzinghian itself, and the monuments left there by the Seljook and the Ak-Koionlee dynasties, I must not here attempt description; the subject would lead me too far. I can only give a passing word of notice to a bold and well-executed bas-relief representing a dragon writhing under the claws of a lion, which I found on the wall of a stone vault beneath the citadel. The building, a fortified quadrilateral, belongs to the Tatar or Turanian kingdom of the Koionlees, but shows now neither date nor inscription. A more frequent emblem hereabouts is that of the lamb,—Ak-Koion means, as all know, “white sheep;” and two colossal stone images of this animal have been lately dug up in the neighbourhood of the citadel, and have been placed, by way of ornament, one on each side of the principal entrance.

Curious, too, are the so-called “Kizil-bash,” or “Red-head,” settlements near Erzinghian. My learned colleague, Mr. Taylor of Erzeroom, has closely studied and given much information regarding these sectarians; they are apparently of Tatar origin, probably Ghuz or Oghuz, who have remained here since their victorious forays of A.D. 1100 circ.: in the midst of Ottoman rule they have maintained a certain independence of self-government, and a quasi-Paganism of creed. I visited one of their villages in the Cherdakh gorge, and was much interested by the cemetery, where, carved in low bas-relief on the tombs, I found the rude resemblances of plates, water-jugs, loaves, coffee-pots, knives, ploughs, swords, guns,—in a word, of all articles most in use during life, and of which some kind of continuance was thus apparently suggested after death.

Another point of interest, that which, indeed, occasioned my visit to Erzinghian, was the presence of the head-quarters of the Anatolian army-corps, since transferred to Erzeroom. About 5,000 men, horse, foot, artillery and pioneer, were gathered together in the great barracks erected by Derveesh Pasha outside the town; and the obligingness of the officers in command threw open to my inspection every detail of quarters, baths, hospital, workshops, magazines and stores. I could say much on the excellent discipline observed in this corps; on the mutual confidence existing between officers and men; on the occupations of the camp, and such-like topics, but the character of this description, geographical or geological in the main, forbids me so wide a divergence.

But here I pause a moment to regret that those whom professional study and scientific training have rendered capable of accurate investigation should not have yet been drawn towards these districts. An exoteric,—laic is, I believe, the term now preferred,—like myself, may notice here and there prominent phenomena and isolated facts; but such a one cannot trace their connection, appreciate their value, or explain their mutual bearings in the way that could be done by another who has made these things the study of his life.

I resume my route; now north-west by west. It leads up the Cherdakh Pass, across the undulating high lands of Koshak-Dagh, where the aneroid indicates an elevation of 8,800 feet, and thus onwards, till on the third day we begin descending from the plateau, and, by the morning of the fourth, enter the long valley that runs behind the coast range, parallel to it for more than 100 miles. Here flows, from east to west, the Kelkeet-Soo, or "Kelkeet River," so called from the plateau whence it has origin, once the Lycus, till ultimately it joins the Yeshil-Irmak, or "Green River," the Iris of the Greeks, and with it falls into the sea east of Samsoon. The height of the channel here is exactly 3,000 feet. We cross it; and a rapid climb of 2,000 feet on the northern side brings us up to Kara-Hisar, where it stands on the inner slope of the coast-chain, here styled Chal-Dagh. It is the same mountain series as the Kolat-Dagh, which we had surmounted seventeen days before in an opposite direction, about eighty or ninety miles away to the east.

As now we traverse the great shelf, on the further or northern side of which stands the town of Kara-Hisar, I observe that the entire soil beneath our horses' feet is a pavement of lava and tuff, black and grey; while to right, left, and in front of us, rise great black abrupt masses, also lava, and reaching to several hundred feet in height. These, when we advance, group themselves into an enormous oval of nearly four miles in total length, by two-and-a-half in breadth, interrupted, however, by wide gaps; and wanting for about one-fourth of its circumference on the southern side, where the encroaching torrent of Shahr-Soo, crossing the oval on its way to the Kelkeet river, has seemingly undermined and swept it away. However, the general outline of this monster crater is still easily distinguishable, as are also the lava streams that have issued from it. One of these may be tracked for a distance of six or seven miles down to the Kelkeet valley, where its vertical section shows a thickness of more than 100 feet.

Nestled at the foot of one of these rugged fragments of the crater-rim lies the little town of Kara-Hisar; and six hundred feet above, atop of the almost perpendicular lava-crag, stands the "Black Castle," from which it takes its name. The castle itself is built of the same black and porous lava. I clambered up the steps roughly hewn in the cliff, and over the main entrance of the fort found carved the double-headed eagle of the Seljook dynasty, but no inscription or date. It is not generally known, yet it appears to be certain, that it was from the Seljook emblem that the later Byzantines, and after them others, borrowed the fancied bicapital bird of empire. The greater part of the castle is a mere heap of ruins; but the octagon tower, which served for a look-out, with the vaulted keep below it, is still nearly perfect, and its crowning lantern of pointed arches is by no means devoid of grace. With some difficulty, for half the steps are broken away, I climbed to the summit; the reader may, if he likes, accompany me, and join me in studying the view around with less inconvenience to himself.

We are here in the centre of volcanic action, long since extinct and spent; below us on every side is a congealed pool of black lava, ribbed, furrowed, and heaped up like waves of a storm. But beyond this immediate radius the mountain strata are wholly metamorphic, shale, gniess, slate, and the like; every part has clearly been penetrated once by intense heat. About eight miles to the west rises the small dark volcanic cone of Tekman Tepe; and far away, but in the same line, peers the strange isolated peak called the Ildiz-Dagh, or "Star Mountain," volcanic also, as the lava and pumice round it—I visited it two years before—amply testify.

Where we now are is part of the old volcanic line that runs parallel to the sea near the northern coast of Asia Minor, from long. 35° to 42° nearly. The period of its activity must have been very remote, and antecedent to the glacial, for the numerous craters, lava-dykes, basalt masses, and other evidences of its energy that yet remain, have undergone considerable modifications from torrents, rains, ice, frost, and snow. Some vestiges, however, of its original energy yet remain in the numerous hot springs that stud this entire region. One of these rises at scarce ten miles from Kara-Hisar; three others I have myself visited when journeying west of this point down the Kelkeet-Soo valley; two more I came on in an easterly direction from it; besides many others known to the natives. Public baths have been erected over many, and all are called "Ilijeh," or "healing." They contain some iron, like that, for example, near Kara-Hisar; others lime. Besides these, several springs of the ordinary temperature bubble up with carbonic gas; of such is one at about six miles' distance from Trebizond; while another, near the "Star Mountain," gushes up with such violence as to form a kind of permanent geyser, about four feet in height. But earthquake shocks are rare in this region, and, when they do occur, feeble.

Here I may appropriately mention two formations, noted by myself in the course of this very journey, and both volcanic.

The first is indeed situated close to Trebizond, at the very outset of my route; but I did not give it then place in my narrative, lest I should too much interrupt the series of remarks relative to the glacial period. It is a huge dyke of columnar basalt, interposed between the Juraine strata at an average distance of eighteen miles from the coast behind Trebizond. The Deyermend valley cuts right through it, and exposes a section of several hundred feet in height; the pillars are vertical, angular, and extremely regular. This dyke I subsequently followed for about seven miles, reaching to the south-east; everywhere it is of a perfectly homogeneous character; the colour is greenish brown.

The second formation, belonging to the same category, is that of Cape Yoros, such being the modern pronunciation of the Greek "Hieros," on the Black Sea coast to the west of Trebizond, between that port and Tripoli. A month and a half after my visit to Kara-Hisar, I returned by this dangerous and almost untrodden cliff-track, where for miles together

the only way leads along a ledge in the face of the crag, not three feet wide, and from which a single slip would be certain death. Thus I obtained a long-desired opportunity for studying this extraordinary promontory. A gigantic fan of basaltic columns, which seem to radiate from some hidden centre deep below, spreads out tier beyond tier, in concentric circles; one part of the arc abuts against the cliff itself; half of it fronts the sea, and forms the cape. Its colour is like that before described, greenish-grey; and every rib is, to the eye, of the same dimensions as the other. Scrambling along the rock, I approached it as near and sketched it as well as I could, much to the annoyance of my motley escort, who were anxious to get clear without delay of so break-neck a spot. This basaltic mass is, I think, nothing else than the westerly extremity of the dyke already mentioned.

But now let us redescend the watch-tower of Kara-Hisar, and before we leave the Castle, take a look at the curious fragments of old armour strewed over the floor of the keep. Some of them are half melted; this condition, as well as the deep rifts all down the walls, are ascribed by the natives hereabouts to the effects of a flash of lightning that, say they, struck the building several years ago.

North of Kara-Hisar, at about thirteen miles distant in the rise of the mountain-chain, here called the Kara-Gul, and over which passes the direct road to Cherasond and the Black Sea coast, are the mines of Tamzerah, famous for their yield of silver and lead. Thither next I go, traversing for four or five miles the black lava overflow, till it ceases almost abruptly; and the road is gradually upward by a rugged ravine through the metamorphic strata which succeed to the volcanic. In this region are four alum-pits, styled mines, and worked with small profit by the Turkish Government. The mineral is abundant, and the process of refining inexpensive; but the workmen employed are mostly "Greeks," and, of course, dishonest, while the negligence of the superintending officials favours the diversion of the gain.

We then ford the ferruginous stream flowing down yet warm from the Ilijeh before mentioned; ride for a hot and weary hour up the arid ravine, till the Kargha-Dagh (or "Crow Mountain") faces in the front, and shows us the mine we are come to visit.

It is a single tunnel or shaft, open to an extent of about 900 feet into the mountain, and sloping downwards by an angle of nearly 10° . I will here give some statistics relative to the mine collected by myself, and showing, not so much what it is, in the most rude and imperfect fashion that the labour is at present carried on, as what it might be.

The average portion of metal contained in the ore on its first extraction is 55 per cent. lead and 5 per cent. silver. But among the heaps piled below the shaft I found some specimens in which the lead was as much as 82 per cent. The monthly produce of the works is stated at 220 lbs. of silver, and 49,500 of lead; much of the silver is, however, lost, owing to the coarseness of the smelting and refining processes. The

number of the calcining furnaces was, when I was there, twenty-six; besides, there were two smelting furnaces, and six more for the separation of the silver from the lead, and its further cleansing. There were thus thirty-four in all. The total of workmen employed, including the charcoal-burners, is between five and six hundred.

The proprietorship of the mine belongs to the Turkish Government, from whom it is rented by two partners, the one a Greek, the other an Armenian. I made acquaintance with them; and each, when in private, informed me that his associate was a speculating rogue. I believed them both on their word and still do so. Besides the original "concession," for which I do not doubt that they had to pay handsomely, they are obliged to furnish the Government with an annual supply of 385 lbs. of silver, representing a value of 1,400*l*. On the lead obtained no duty is taken.

The chief difficulty in conducting the work arises from the scarcity of fuel. Wood is of scanty growth throughout the shaly rocks of the neighbourhood, and it has to be brought from a considerable distance; a process which, in a very mountainous country, and where steep horse-tracks are the only means of communication, involves much labour and expense. The same remarks apply, of course, to charcoal, here absolutely necessary for the refining furnaces. Coal there is none; or, better said, none available within reach; for of the mineral itself there is no doubt that a plentiful supply exists under the plateau and in the mountains not many miles to the south. This can be asserted the more confidently, because pieces of fine and close-grained anthracite are continually picked up on the surface of the ground thereabouts, and are worked into mouthpieces for pipes, cigarette-holders, and other trinkets, which local ignorance designates by the name of "black amber." I have myself also often observed a coarser kind of anthracite lying about in the valleys and among the torrent beds.

But in no case has any serious search after coal been yet made; and this treasure, like many others in Asia Minor, remains untouched, while the mining furnaces are fed with wood or charcoal as best may be.

Another difficulty is the want of machinery. It is true that the lessees of this mine began by having some transported hither from Europe; but before it had completed its rough and expensive carriage hither, it was so grievously disjointed and broken as to be wholly useless. No one was present to repair and put it up; and indeed had there been any one of sufficient skill for the task, he could hardly have found the means for effecting it.

A third great obstacle is the want of skilled labour, or, to speak correctly, of any labour or hands at all. The region round about is under-peopled; and the peasants, who are the greater part proprietors of some three or four acres apiece, are unwilling to abandon their cultivation in favour of mining employment. Nor is this reluctance unreasonable on their part, since arable land, if left fallow for more than three years, relapses by Turkish law to the crown. Attempts have been made to supply

this deficiency of labour by the importation of practised European workmen, especially Germans. But the scheme has ended in total failure, owing to causes too many and too complicated for explanation here, but which any one acquainted with Anatolia may easily divine.

This discussion may perhaps be thought to lie too far apart from the general scope of my description; but my object in briefly touching on these topics is to furnish a hint for the guidance of such as may feel tempted to invest capital or enterprise in the mines of this country. Not one of the difficulties mentioned but might be satisfactorily overcome: only not one has, in practice, been overcome as yet.

During the further continuation of this journey, at about 160 miles west of Kara-Hisar, I visited a second mine, that of Hajjee-Koi, near Marsivan, worked by Turks alone, and with a somewhat better result. There the annual produce acknowledged was 1,334 lbs. of silver, and 194,176 lbs. of lead, while the number of workmen came somewhat short of 200.

But besides silver and lead, other minerals abound throughout the metamorphic coast-zone. Copper ore is to be found everywhere washed down in the ravines; indeed, at some miles distant from Kara-Hisar, I witnessed a curious and, to me, a novel phenomenon—namely, a stream so strongly impregnated with copper as to present the colour, and almost the consistency, of pea-soup; its breadth was about twelve feet, and its extreme depth a foot or so. Into this stream the natives are in the habit of throwing pieces of iron, in lieu of which they withdraw, some days later, corresponding bars of the purest copper, every atom of the former metal having been, through chemical action, replaced by an atom of the latter. I had some trouble to get my horse through this stream, as the animal instinctively recoiled from dipping his hoofs into the corrosive fluid.

Iron, too, abounds, but is nowhere dug for or worked. Gold occurs in small quantities, insufficient, I should think, to repay the cost and labour of extraction and refining.

To sum up: the mineral district immediately around Kara-Hisar contains eighteen mines, four of silver and lead, two only of which are now, however, worked, and fourteen of copper. But the best of these are, so to speak, mere surface scratchings, that may serve to indicate, nohow to exhaust, the riches beneath; just as the descriptions I have just given are themselves nothing but poor gleanings of a plentiful harvest, ungathered yet, because the labourers in the harvest are not few, but none.

W. GIFFORD PALGRAVE.

"Regeneration:"

A TALE OF 1772.

I.

ON the eve of New Year's Day, 1772, one of those undiligent contrivances which were just then beginning to be called diligences, rumbled up the Rue St. Denis in Paris, with more cracking of whip on the part of the postilion than perhaps the matter required. The postilion wore a glazed hat with a peak to it, a blue jacket with four-score of brass buttons, boots rising to mid-thigh, and a pigtail descending half a foot beyond his shoulder-blades. He was also clean shaved, or ought to have been; and his cracking his whip was nothing but an affectionate way of intimating to the inhabitants of the Rue St. Denis that here was he back again from Chantilly with a cargo of passengers from the north—an intimation for which the inhabitants seemed to care but little, seeing that it being then six o'clock in the evening, they were all withindoors at supper, and had no time to bestow upon street noises. So the coach jogged on its way over the bumpy stones with which the Provost of Paris was wont to obstruct the roads under pretence of paving them, and so on up to the coach-yard half-way down the thoroughfare, where everybody alighted—that is, two men, one about five-and-thirty years old, whose periwig and coat, though a little rumpled by travel, were of good French make; the other, a somewhat younger man, whose clothes looked as if they had been cut in a foreign country, and who, by the sword that dangled at his side, contrary to the fashion then recently adopted by civilians, might be taken for a soldier. Though the two passengers had been faring together for the last six leagues, it was evident that they had not struck up much of an acquaintance, for the first thing they did upon descending was to complain of the bad condition of the roads, which made conversation impossible. This they did, laughing at their misfortune, as the fashion is among Frenchmen; and both having thus broken the ice, began rummaging together for their luggage, the elder man with the correct periwig seeming much more concerned about a large parcel of books tied together by a rope than about his leathern valise. However, both books and valise were lifted out with equal jauntiness by an ostler with hay bound round his legs in lieu of boots; the military man's two trunks were also lowered from the roof with a great deal of useless shouting by a second ostler booted like the first; and a silver pound (read one franc) having been tendered by each passenger to the postilion in honour of its being New Year on the morrow, the whole party, travellers, ostlers and thankful postilion, trooped across the frost-carpeted yard into the inn called

"L'Hôtel d'Artois," which figured hard by. As they went, the younger passenger said respectfully to the elder: "Is the Hôtel d'Espagne still the best hotel in Paris, sir?"

"Yes," answered the other, smiling under his three-cornered hat, and drawing his ample cloak closer round him for the cold. "But the Hôtel d'Espagne in the Rue St. Honoré is far, whereas hunger is near—at least, I speak for mine." And he pointed to the ground-floor windows of the Hôtel d'Artois, rendered ruddy by the glow of a splendid wood fire, which lit up half the yard.

In front of the fire were roasting fraternally on the same spit a hare, a fowl, and a loin of veal, and by the spit was standing a boy with a white muffin-cap on, who, ladle in hand, was basting these pieces of roast. "I think," added the stranger, quickening his pace, "there is that in this sight would tempt even Monsieur le Prince de Soubise, who, they say, loves his dinner better than anything in this world—or the next." Upon which he laughed, and so did the other.

The travellers were received at the door by a cheery host dressed all in white, and with a sheath full of many-sized knives in his belt, who proceeded to tell them—which was an untruth, but a very pleasant one—that he had guessed he should be honoured by persons of quality that evening, and so had prepared a better dinner than usual. Saying this, he peered rather ruefully over the shoulders of the two gentlemen to see whether there were not more of them behind, but detecting none, veiled his disappointment under an inaudible sigh and an imperceptible shrug, smirked, and bade the two which Providence had sent him welcome. A courteous embarrassment then took place in the doorway, respecting which of the travellers should cross the threshold first, each insisting to yield that honour to the other. But when the elder saw that the younger was decidedly resolved not to precede him, he passed, saying, with a politeness which we should consider stilted now, but which was no more than customary then: "Your servant leads, sir, to show you the way." And show the way he did, straight into the kitchen where the fowl, the hare, and the veal were roasting under the eye of the boy with the muffin-cap, and to the music of a buff dog, whose function it was to turn the spit, and who clattered rhythmically with his feet as he did so.

Civilization having not yet invented the coffee-room—at least, for small French inns—it was in the kitchen that travellers were used to dine; and a very jovial kitchen this one was, with its chimney big enough to cook for a whole regiment; its clean, pink-tiled floor with yellow sprinkling of sand; its broad deal table running down the middle of the room, and its furbished rows of pewter-platters lighting up the shelves of the dresser as if they were silver. From a beam that bisected the whole length of the smoke-greyed ceiling hung bunches of lavender, mint, and rue, Mayence hams in their brown coats, pieces of bacon-flitch, half-dozens of rushlights suspended by their stiff wicks, and endless

strings of silky, chubby onions, a few of which an alert damsel was plucking down just as the travellers entered, to put into a stew-pot. She wore a red and white striped gown, did this damsel, a close-fitting black jacket, a sackcloth apron, hair combed straight off the forehead without a parting, and a white cap tied under her chin and covering both her ears, which must have been pretty ones, to judge from the rest of the face. She ought also to have been wearing a white kerchief pinned cross-wise over her bosom, but the heat had made her throw this off, and further induced her to unfasten the top hooks of her jacket, so that her snow-white throat stood revealed in contrast to her cheeks, which flamed like the wood-embers that were doing the roast. With this, her arms bared up to her shoulders, a knife in one hand and the onions in the other, she looked like a Diana Ultrix or like a priestess about to do sacrifice; and the two gentlemen raised their hats at the apparition, astonished and perhaps a little charmed. She answered, with that archly demure humility which pretty woman knows how to bestow upon miserable man, but immediately turned to hide her laughter in her apron, for in baring his head, the younger of the strangers had disclosed the fact that he had no wig, but wore his own hair, a proceeding as absurd and unnatural as though one of our ladies was to do the same thing now-a-days. Even the boy with the muffin-cap was moved to mirth at it, and though he had no wig of his own, but only bristles, averted his head grinning, and began to baste his roast with energy, so as not to let it be seen how much he enjoyed the joke.

"Jacqueline," exclaimed the host, who had also been a little dismayed by the absence of a wig on his guest's head, beginning to wonder who the man could be who displayed such eccentricity—"Jacqueline, here are two worshipful travellers who request to have each one of our best rooms" (this he said pointedly, to prove whether the wigless stranger would betray penury by suggesting that one bed-room might do for the two; but the stranger said nothing); "and," added the host, putting out a new feeler, "the gentlemen desire to be served with a bottle of our best Burgundy from behind the faggots to wash down that hare withal."

"Yes," answered he without the wig, approvingly, "I have been so long absent from France, Sir Host, that a bottle of Burgundy will look like the face of an old friend."

"He has been long absent from France," was the host's moody reflection as Mdlle. Jacqueline, wiping the onion knife on her apron, cut down two of the rushlights and stuck them in brass candlesticks. "Who knows but that he may be a Prussian spy?" and as Mdlle. Jacqueline, having lit the two dips, offered each of the strangers one, preparatory to conducting them to their rooms, he nudged the postilion, who had entered with his fares and was now unceremoniously drawing off his boots by the fireside, and whispered, "Jean-Pierre, who are our two travellers—do you know?"

"No, I don't," answered Jean-Pierre, as the strangers vanished with

Mdlle. Jacqueline, who was still smothering fitful gusts of laughter in her apron. "All I know is that the postilion at Chantilly told me the younger one comes from Havre, and paid genteelly at all the relays. As for the other he got in at Chantilly itself, and when we reached the town-dues' barrier at St. Denis, he had a row with the Customs' officer about a book of his, written by an English heretic, one Monsieur Hume I think they said, which he was carrying under his arm. And as the Customs' officers are very stiff in all that concerns our Catholic religion, blessed if he'd ever have got the book through at all if he hadn't bribed them all round, beginning with Monsieur the lieutenant of Customs, who, hearing there was money going on down below, hurried into our midst, and was for citing chapter and verse of the Papal edict which curses that Monsieur Hume's works to all eternity, if my fare hadn't stopped his mouth with a half-crown piece."

"God be praised," sighed the host, much relieved, "if he bribes like that he must be a true gentleman," and lifting a copper pitcher of wine from off the dresser he poured out the postilion a mugful. "You see, Jean-Pierre, times are hard now, and two customers only on a New Year's eve is not much."

"No, it ain't," assented Jean-Pierre; who, having got off his boots by this time, accepted the mug nothing loth and drained it. "With bread at five sous the four pounds, and a famine * every other year or so for a change, and with the price of lodgings rising so that I, Jean-Pierre, have to pay two francs a month for a room on the fifth floor, there's not much to be crying *Te Deum laudamus* for in church of a Sunday."

"And taxes!" proceeded the cheery host, dismally, as he laid the cloth at the end of the table furthest from the fire. "If our King, whom the saints guard, puts it into his head to get us thrashed again by the Prussians or the English—whom may the devil take—not even M. Terray, the Controller of Finances—whom may the ten plagues of Egypt pursue to his graveside and beyond it—not even he will be able to wrench more money out of us to pay the cost. You don't draw wheat out of empty sacks, says the byword."

"No, you don't!" ejaculated the postilion, rapping his bare heels on the floor (for postilions were not yet indoctrinated to the use of socks in those days). "No, but it's this M. Terray who has said that the people

* Five terrible famines ravaged France during the 18th century, viz. in 1740-41, 1752, 1767-69, 1775-78, and 1788-89. All five were artificial, that is designedly caused by that association known as le Pacte de Famine—a company which numbered Louis XV. among its secret members, and had for its object the buying-up of all the corn in the land, so that in years of the greatest plenty the people might be made to pay for their bread at famine prices. Five financiers were the promoters of this delightful traffic,—Orry, Taboureaux des Réaux, Boudain, Langlois, and Trudaine de Montigny, and the fortunes they made were colossal. In 1769, a clerk of the name of Rinville, having discovered the secret of the monopolists, made an attempt to divulge it, and met with the usual fate of those who lift up their voices at the wrong time. He was thrust into the Bastille, and eked out twenty years of his unworthy life there.

are an orange which one must squeeze—squeeze like this," added he, wringing some melted frost out of his pigtail, "and I bethink me he will squeeze us so long as he has the chance, for at St. Denis they were saying that there were two fresh taxes coming to us for a New Year's gift."

"If I had the larrapping of him for just five minutes with that whip of yours!" grumbled the cheery host.

Here the boy with the muffin-cap, who was none other than the host's son, turned round giggling and said, "'Tother day when I was at the Innocents' market a-buying meat, came along a whopping coach with two outriders in front and a black behind, and some one shouted, 'It's l'Abbé Terray.' Then everybody rushed up hooting and shaking their fists; and I caught up a turnip off a stall, a big turnip, and let fly at the coach-window and broke the glass. Then I ran away."

"Thou'lt get thee whipped by the hangman one of these days," growled his unappreciative sire. "Let me catch thee throwing aught at coaches of the great again, and I'll box thy ears for thee. Get to thy basting."

The boy got to his basting, and no doubt began to speculate, as he plied his ladle, wherefore it should be lawful to wish a Minister assailed by the ten plagues of Egypt but not to throw a turnip at him. Meanwhile the host, moving as briskly as might be, set out on the table pewter-plates, short thick-stemmed glasses, black-handled knives, two-pronged forks, and a pint goblet full of grey salt, each grain of which was the size of a small hailstone. And the postilion seeing these preparations advancing, forgot for a moment the high price of his lodging and the Abbé Terray, bent over the spit, sniffed and said, "That's a fine piece of veal, Master Moufflot: I'll sup off a slice of it."

"You shall," nodded the host; "Jacqueline 'll set the cloth for us at this end, but not till the gentlemen have done. Here they are, it seems; I hear them coming downstairs. Clovis" (this to the boy), "go down to the cellar and fetch two bottles of the yellow seal, and mind they're well rubbed in the cobwebs before coming up. Bestir thyself."

Clovis departed; the gentlemen re-entered, having deposited their cloaks and luggage upstairs, and in another ten minutes the supper was dished up. But we are not going to describe this supper, which differed little from the ordinary suppers of men who are hungry. During forty minutes the strangers turned their undivided attention successively to a dish of trout, the hare, a bowl of haricot-beans, and a cream-tart; and it was not till midle. Jacqueline had brought a dish of walnuts, and Clovis two more bottles of yellow seal, that their proceedings began to assume any noteworthy interest. For then the younger man, pushing back his chair, and thrusting his hands deep into the flap-pockets of his waistcoat, said, with a grave smile, "If men only sup well in their native lands, this is the first time I have supped for ten years."

"Ten years!" echoed his companion politely, and examining him

with interest. "You must have been young, monsieur, when you began roving."

"It was not roving for pleasure," answered the other. "Ten years ago, Quebec in Canada had just been taken by the English, and brave Montcalm slain. As you may remember, a thrill ran through the country, and crushed as we were by the disasters of that accursed Seven Years' War, strength enough was still left in us to organize a legion for the relief of our fairest colony. I was one of the two hundred who sailed for America in '61, and were cut to pieces six months after."

"Two hundred heroes, sir," said the elder man emphatically, and bowing.

"Yes," rejoined the speaker, taking up his glass and looking at the red liquid in it; for Frenchmen have never been prone to self-disparagement, and this one saw no reason why, being a hero, he should not call himself so. He was a handsome young man, notwithstanding that little drawback about the wig, and the habitual expression on his face was one of frankness and energy. His clothes, as we have already said, were against him, being rude of cut and of unfashionable plum-colour; but this was more than compensated by the grace with which he wore these faulty garments, and also by his strength of limb, which suggested that it might turn out unpleasantly for any one, save a woman, who chose to make merry at his expense. His ways were a little abrupt when he warmed in conversation, but they were always courteous, and on the whole he conveyed the impression of being a young man quick to take offence but not quarrelsome, well-pleased with himself but not over-weening, fond of talk and yet just halting on the right side of the line which divides loquacity from babbling. As to his companion, the five or six years' difference of age would not have been enough to account for that mellowed look of matured good-nature—those soft ways of easy urbanity which distinguished this quiet and well-dressed gentleman. Here was evidently a man who had seen, said, and done much more than a vulgar man would have suspected from his mere talk; but experience, instead of ripening him into a cynic, had made him wholly indulgent for human foibles—so indulgent, indeed, that when he heard or witnessed anything peculiarly human, that is selfish, he would nod his well-powdered head gently, as though to say, "Oh, yes, this is an old friend; I have met with it so many and many a time before," and, doing this, would take a pinch of snuff. His features were as handsome as those of his younger *vis-à-vis*, perhaps handsomer, for they had a touch of that refinement which is only bred of acquaintance with the best of society; but he had that in him which was worth more than good looks—a brow and eyes that stamped him as a man of genius, and also a voice that quickly arrested the attention of intelligent persons, and made them inclined to exclaim, "This is no common man."

"Yes," repeated the younger stranger, continuing to look through his wine, whilst his companion opposite looked benevolently at him. "Yes;

of the two hundred of us, I think there remained no more than ten when the six months were over. I myself was taken prisoner, and remained so till the peace—that shameful peace of '63, which placed us the lowest among nations. Ah, sir! if you have never been prisoner, and have never known what it is to hear an enemy say, 'We have dictated a peace which you have signed!' you have never felt what it is to be humiliated." He emptied his glass at a draught, set it down with a rap on the table, and added vehemently, "Those humiliations come of the King putting himself and his people under the tutelage of harlots."

"Tush!" exclaimed the other, with a cautious smile, and he glanced down the table towards the fireside end, where Master Moufflot the host, Jean-Pierre the postilion, and Clovis of the muffin-cap were supping, under the attendance of Mdle. Jacqueline, who, woman-like, had heard everything, but who also, having been repenting her a little, after frequent glances at the young man, of the way in which she had laughed at him at first, made a clatter with her iron-heeled shoes, and so opportunely drowned his voice.

"It is ever unsafe to speak the truth, I know," took up the young man, lowering his tone by an octave; "but there are things that would call for the brazen trumpets of Joshua to proclaim them. If you knew how much I suffered from what I heard our enemies say—that the days of France were over, that the vital spirit had gone out of us, that we were fit to be only the cooks and dancing-masters of Europe! I had not the courage to return to my country. When free, I began to travel, seeing everywhere I went new empires starting into birth under the wing of our powerful rival. In America, in India, in the southern plains of Africa, —everywhere the English tongue was spoken, and the French name unknown or derided. Everywhere I noted English enterprise, English commerce, English war-ships sailing proudly in their queenship of the seas; and, if I met with anything French, it was some woman's frippery, or an obscene book, which men read laughing over their cups and with closed doors, tossing it into the fire afterwards, with a contemptuous shrug for the author and for the land that produced him. I could have clutched some of these churls by the throat, and shaken the life out of them in my bitterness and jealousy; but what would that have profited? I dragged on my weary journey from land to land, closing my ears to French news, as a man does who fears that he shall only hear things that he will have cause to redden at. When I saw a Frenchman, I avoided him; if a French gazette came within my reach, I fled from it. It was by a pure hazard that, eighteen months ago, being in Calcutta, where the English are founding an Eastern London, I heard that the woman Pompadour, who had governed us, was dead; that the Duke de Choiseul, free from the trammels of this unworthy jade, was renewing our army, rebuilding our navy, and scattering everywhere around him with his statesman-like hand the seeds of order, prosperity, and future glory. You will not laugh at me, monsieur, when I say that, on hearing this

news, and living as I was among strangers, whose happiness I had been envying, I buried my head in my hands and wept. 'Why do you shed tears?' they said. And I answered, 'I weep like an orphan who thought his mother dead, and hears she has resuscitated.'

There was genuine emotion in the way in which these words were pronounced, and Mdle. Jacqueline, who had heard as before, did a little more clattering with her shoes. As for the elder stranger, he nodded silently, and leaned over the table to refill his companion's glass. But then he resumed his position, and glanced inquiringly at the young man, as if to say, "And what then?"

"Well," rejoined the young man, divining the query, "then I instantly made my arrangements to return home. I had been secretly longing for such a minute, as a lover longs for the moment when he shall be reconciled to his mistress, or a prodigal for the day when he shall bend his steps towards his father's house again. The ship that bore me went fast—we were but three months sailing from Calcutta to the Cape of Good Hope—but the wind itself would not have been swift enough for my desires. At the Cape, too, I fell ill—perhaps, from excitement, and the fear that great things might be done in France before I was there to take part in them. You know that feeling: it is not a noble one; but love is ever selfish. At last, however, I recovered, and embarked on an English vessel, which took me from the Cape to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Brazils—without meaning it, but the winds were contrary—and from the Brazils to Bristol. At Bristol I changed ships, and sped to Havre, where I landed three days ago, never having willingly paused a single hour, and yet having been sixteen months on my journey. But now all the trouble is over, thanks be to Providence! and to-morrow I purpose going to Versailles, and paying my court to the Duke de Choiseul. I shall remind him that my father and he were friends, and ask him to let me be employed in some capacity in the King's service. I have a thirst to serve my country, and devote to her use some of the experience and knowledge I have picked up in the world. Why should not France—I have often asked myself during the weary night vigils on board those vessels—why should not France be as great as England? What have the English more than we? Have we not wit, bravery, and strength? Wherefore, then, should we be condemned to perpetually grope and stumble, whilst they soar? It needs but a man to lead us, I used to think—a man not led by woman; and now, it seems, we have this man in the Duke de Choiseul, who, if life and the King's favour be spared him, is to make of France the country she was during the short ten years that Henri IV. reigned. Here's to him, and confusion to all his enemies, great and small!"

The young man raised his glass to his lips and drained it. His companion, looking at him the while with an expression in which interest and pity were curiously blended. Master Moufflot the host, having just caught the name of the Duke de Choiseul over the din which he and the

postilion were making with their knives, pricked up his ears, and glanced up the table, seeing which, Mdlle. Jacqueline, ever quick, hurried to his side, and nudged him once or twice with the wine-pitcher. There was a moment's silence: then the elder stranger, after appearing to hesitate as to whether he should speak or no, said, gently, "The news you received eighteen months ago was, presumably, nine or ten months' old, monsieur?"

"Yes," answered the other; "it may have been a year old. It came from a traveller who had crossed France and visited half Europe before sailing for India."

"And you have heard none since?"

"None. My lot has been among Englishmen, who thought too much about their own business to care for ours."

"Then you have not heard, monsieur" (and here the speaker's tone was very soft and very considerate)—"you have not heard that the Duke de Choiseul has been disgraced these two years, with his cousin, the Duke de Praslin, and all his colleagues; that his successor is the frivolous Duke d'Aiguillon, who has M. Maupeou for his Chancellor, and a certain mad Abbé Terray for his Finance Minister; that the Parliament of Paris has been abolished, and replaced by a Council of court favourites, who mete out justice by the crown's-worth; that Madame de Pompadour, who could at least spell her name, has been replaced by a Marquise du Barry, whom his Majesty picked out of the gutter to set over our heads; and that, under this woman's rule, the honour of France has fallen into such a pretty plight that we are about to consent to the partition of the kingdom of Poland, once our ally, from time out of mind our friend."

All this was uttered quietly but rapidly at a breath. The young man sprang to his feet as if he had been insulted, and, in the suddenness of his start, overturned his glass, which fell with a crash on the floor. Pale, and with glaring eyes, he rested both hands on the table, and, leaning forward, said hoarsely and angrily, "Is this a joke, sir? Who are you that tell me this?" And clutching the tablecloth under his excited fingers, he widened a small rent that had been there to the size of a cheese-plate, greatly to the dismay of Mdlle. Jacqueline, who clasped her hands and made a step forward, ejaculating a "Oh, mon Dieu!"

The elder stranger had risen too, and so had the host, the postilion, and Clovis of the muffin-cap; but the stranger was spared the trouble of stating either his name or his profession, at least for the moment, for just at this juncture footsteps sounded in the courtyard, then over the threshold of the house, and in less than a minute the kitchen-door opened, and revealed two gentlemen, one of whom carried a lantern and staff, the other a ledger and a truncheon. It was not difficult to recognize this pair for officers of M. de Sartine, the Lieutenant-General of Police, for they had villainous countenances; and in those days the police were chiefly recruited among criminals, in deference to the advice of a well-known proverb. It should be stated that M. de Sartine was a pearl among Ministers of Police.

Not a man entered or left Paris, or bought or sold, or read, wrote, courted, ate or drank in it, without his being informed of the fact. He had reduced his system of police to such an art that it was justly said of him that, in his time, one half of France were spies upon the other half. The only objection that could be urged against his system was, that he caught few thieves or cut-throats with it, his agents being much too busy seeing what people ate and drank, as aforesaid, to bestow much attention on those who filched or murdered. This was a blemish, certainly; but then, we cannot expect everything.

The man with the ledger advanced, followed by the man with the lantern, and, lifting a finger to his hat, said, with a quick glance at the strangers: "Good-evening, Master Moufflot; any travellers to-day?" Then, without waiting for an answer: "My respects to you, gentlemen; your passports."

Still angry and pale, but a little appeased by this intruding episode, the younger man silently drew a small canvas-bag from one of his pockets, extracted a passport from it, and handed it to the man, who bowed and unfolded it. The functionary with the lantern raised it aloft so that his colleague could see in reading the contents.

"M. le Chevalier Hector de Lafeuille," passport issued by the King's Consul at Bristol. Very good, monsieur. When desiring to leave Paris, you will be kind enough to call for this at the office of M. le Lieutenant Général in the Châtelet." (Here he dropped the passport into the skirt pocket of his coat.) "Twenty-two sous to pay, if you please—the King's duty on travellers of distinction—and what you think good" (here the two hats were abjectly removed) "for your humble servants, who receive no pay."

The young man gave a crown-piece worth three francs; and, simultaneously, the other traveller handed his passport, also with a crown-piece to accompany it. The document was unfolded as before, and the man with the ledger glanced at the name—"M. BERNARDIN DE SAINT-PIERRE."

II.

There have, in all times, been men who loved their country with a fervour that was distressing to others who could not share in the sentiment to the same extent. Good, easy M. de Saint-Pierre was a loyal Frenchman, and loved both king and country as they deserve to be loved; but he had never gone to the length of feeling uncomfortable because either one or the other seemed out of order; and the violence of the Chevalier de Lafeuille's outburst at the news that the King was going as wrong as ever, and the country rather worse than ever, struck him first as a thing to be admired as new, next as a thing to be gently combated with soothing arguments. Accordingly, when M. de Sartine's two gentlemen had withdrawn, along with the passports and the crown-pieces, and when Master Moufflot had picked up the bits of broken glass, and Mlle. Jacqueline looked at the rent in the tablecloth, M. de Saint-Pierre laid a hand on the Chevalier's

arm, and, in a tone so bland that it was impossible to resist it, suggested a stroll in the night air.

"There is a diamond moon overhead," said he; "the streets are dry, we both of us shall be glad to see Paris again, and" (here he smiled) "in walking about I may be able to answer your last question as to who I am."

The streets of Paris a hundred years ago have been described to us by the pessimists of history as thoroughfares where one trudged in mud knee-deep; by the optimists as highways where high-born gentlemen in silk and velvet tripped minuet-like by the side of ladies in hoops and satin, and where even the poorest of men had powder and a smart ribbon to his periwig. Perhaps, if we strike a balance, and say that, in the Paris of 1771-72, there was a great deal of powder and a great deal of mud, but that, on the whole, the mud rather predominated over the powder, we shall have arrived at a just estimate, calculated to wound the feelings of nobody. The city was then a gay city, even as it is now. The little crooked streets, brave with paint and gilding, had nothing in common with the modern flaunting boulevard, but they had beauties after their kind, and, standing at one end of them, and glancing at the two rows of sign-boards that swung lazily with the breeze on either side of the way, one would have been reminded of so many flags hung out in honour of a national festivity. To be sure, all this splendour rather waned when daylight faded, for in those times the means of illumining the darkness were deficient. The plaiting of candle-wicks had not yet been invented, so that even the best of wax-lights used in the houses of the great had to be constantly snuffed, which interfered not a little with their effect. However, towards the close of the year 1771 a great discovery was made for the enlightenment of the human race. A man without a sou found out that, by placing a piece of concave and furbished tin behind an oil-light as a reflector, the dazzling properties of the light would be doubled. Oil-lamps were seldom used then within chambers, for as neither the glass nor the circular wick which we employ with now-a-day "moderators" were discovered, oil-lamps could not consume their own smoke, and were unpleasant companions in consequence; but these flickering contrivances were employed in the streets, and M. de Sartine, who was an innovating Minister as well as a prying one, paid the soulless man for his invention, and caused a reflector to be placed within every one of the lamps of Paris—a great improvement, which allowed a man who was being despoiled by a footpad to guess at least the size of his waylayer, which is the next best thing to seeing his features. The shop-fronts of such tradesmen as displayed their goods to the public eye, were mostly lighted after dusk in winter by red or blue paper lamps of the primitive sort adhered to by the Parisian "ot chestnut" woman of our day; but it was only the eatable shops which then made any show, the tailors, glovers, and especially the jewellers, prudently keeping their wares withindoors. Another peculiarity of the Paris of 1772 was that,

in disregard of the proverb about two of a trade making doubtful friends, vendors of the same articles hung then very much together. If you wanted a pastrycook, you found scores of them living cheek by jowl in the Rue des Lombards. In the Rue St. Denis milliners and mercers abounded; in that of St. Martin stitched endless rows of tailors, and so on. This does not mean that a tailor was not to be met with out of the Rue St. Martin, or a pastrycook out of the Rue des Lombards; but custom is custom; and any tailor erratically inclined, who had begun business by setting up his sign-board in an out-of-the-way street, might have run the risk of having all the other tailors down on him; for this was not an age of ungenerous competition; puff advertisements were unknown, and the tailor who attempted to draw ahead of other tailors was viewed with mistrust as an evil brother. The streets, as we have said, were narrow, though this was not so much felt owing to the scarcity of vehicles. Every now and then, however, would arise amid the hubbub of midday, or the quiet of twilight, an excited cry raised by husky throats of "Place, place!" and with a tremendous clatter of galloping outriders, headlong linkmen, whip-cracking coachmen, and swearing bunch of footmen behind, the coach of some great nobleman would thunder by, casting up showers of mud over unwary pedestrians, making dogs bark, women look out of their windows, babies squall, and stirring up a five minutes' commotion in the whole quarter. But these apparitions were rarer than they might have been, owing to the permanent absence of the court from Paris. Paris was in disgrace then as she has been at other periods of her history. Accustomed, ever since his *liaison* with Madame de Pompadour, to be treated with samples of Parisian loyalty in the shape of stray vegetables and persistent cat-calls, King Louis XV. detested the town so thoroughly, that sooner than cross it when he went a-hunting from Versailles to Vincennes, or elsewhere that way, he would go a two-hours' round, no matter what the weather was. It befell in this wise, that the King doing without Paris, Paris learned to do without its kings, and gradually drifted into that propensity to deride respectable institutions, from which there seems to be no reclaiming it. The Paris of '72 was the Paris of men of letters, women of wit, and strangers. The men known and esteemed there were not the Prince of Gueménée, who kept a hundred and ten horses in his stables; the Bishop of Narbonne, who would only eat off gold; or even the Duke de Richelieu, the loved and feared of woman-kind. Paris, to quote the language of M. le Prince de Gueménée above, excited itself "about the quarrels of a brace of whipper-snappers who lodged in garrets"—which two whipper-snappers were MM. D'Alembert and Diderot. A third whipper-snapper, who was M. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, also came in for a large share of attention; and a fourth, M. de Voltaire, was as popular as the other three put together, and would have been twice more so had he consented to show himself in Paris, which he would not, disliking that city as much as his king did, and perhaps more. All the small boys of Paris knew these great names, and delighted to hoot them in the face of

authority, as other small boys since have done with names rather less illustrious. Only the eighteenth-century small boys would not chalk the names on the walls, with a big "*Vive!*" prefixed, as is now the fashion; for, unfortunately, public instruction was much less widespread than it is in our happy age. So to mark the anti-royal and philo-literary character of Paris, they were fain to bide content with drawing gibbets exhibiting crowned potentates suspended thereto by the neck, and men with pens or books under their arms acting as executioners. This was a very favourite presentment in the year '72, and might be seen on most dead walls along with police edicts relative to the closing of all theatres by ten o'clock, offers of rewards for the capture of highwaymen, and irreverent inscriptions concerning "Blaise" (nickname of the King) and "La Belle Bourbonnaise" (Madame du Barry) scrawled by such few among the elder 'prentices of Paris who had managed to pick up something of calligraphy.

M. de Saint-Pierre and the Chevalier, on leaving the Hôtel d'Artois, sauntered down the Rue St. Denis in the clear, crisp moonlight, and the former lost no time in trying to dispel the gloomy ideas with which the latter seemed haunted. He talked lightly and chattily about current events,—the ministry of Milord North, the last picture by M. Greuze, that curious new book, the *Lettres Athéniennes*, by M. Crébillon the younger, which he thought inferior to the *Sopha*, but in better taste and more moral. Then he touched on Madame du Deffant, and laughed very good-humouredly, though feelingly, on the passion which that witty and so long steel-hearted lady had conceived in her blindness and old age for the Englishman, M. Horace Walpole. But all this did not interest the Chevalier. He had never heard of Madame du Deffant, still less of Monsieur Walpole; and as for M. Crébillon, what little he had heard of him was not to his advantage. He tried to get up a moment's interest in M. de Sartine's new reflectors, and wondered whether the city would ever be rich enough to hang some in the small streets as well as in the populous ones. But this was only a flicker, and after it he relapsed into moodiness again. He was unmistakeably shocked and dejected. He had suffered the acutest pang that a patriot could feel; and it was not in light talking to soothe him.

"If I were you," said his companion with unruffled gentleness, "I would not, my dear friend" (Frenchmen are soon dear friends), "throw away my young life upon that thankless task, the grieving after what is beyond our remedy. Nor would I form any theories as to who is to blame in this or that public calamity. I have ceased to think that we can apportion blame. We know so little of the forces that govern the world, that we can never be sure that the circumstances which grieve us to-day may not be the means of making us rejoice to-morrow. I was once as quick to criticise as you may be; experience cured me. I saw that evil came oftener of accident than of intention; that man was never wholly bad, and that usually those who were abused most deserved it least. I started in life with the longing to be a missionary: my parents, who knew better,

made an engineer of me. As an engineer I thought I discovered that my superiors were rogues. I made a statement of this opinion and was cashiered. By-and-by I learned that the men I had impugned were as good as myself, and possibly better,—that one, whom I had deemed cruel, fed fowls out of his own hand; that another, whom I took to be a thief, wore thread-bare coats in order that a nephew of his whom he didn't like, but supported out of charity, might have new ones; and that a third, against whom I had cherished an unconquerable antipathy, heaven knows why, spoke well of me behind my back and tried to befriend me. I came to Paris, lived miserably and gave mathematical lessons. Some of my pupils went away without paying me. Here, said I, are more rogues; but one day I fell ill, and a pupil who had cheated me out of three francs five sous, nursed me during three weeks and five days, losing more by this transaction than if he had paid me ten times what he owed me. I then went to Russia, became an engineer again and broached schemes for human improvement which were not listened to, amongst others a plan for liberating the serfs. Disgusted, I turned to the Poles, fought for them in their war of independence, and set it down as an article of my creed that I must do all the harm I could to the Russians. One evening a Russian took me prisoner; I struggled with him, fell and hurt myself. He was a man of notoriously ferocious disposition, and I supposed my doom was sealed. He carried me to his house, tended me, and when I was well let me go, thrusting his purse into my hands. After this, you must not ask me to believe in human viciousness; I believe only in human error. Nature makes men good, society spoils them, by setting them to pursuits that are foreign to their instincts and bidding them succeed under pain of starvation. But take even the most selfish man, sound him, and you will find a stream of his native goodness flowing more or less deep below the surface, though often unknown to himself. At supper, an hour ago, I spoke harshly of the Duke d'Aiguillon and Madame du Barry. This I did because I feel bitterly about the partition of Poland—which will be a cruel wrong—but the persons who will sanction it are not cruel. Our King does not rise of a morning and say, 'I will do an injustice to-day.' If any one forewarned him of the injustice he would be pained and startled. When he commits it, weakness is the cause, or ignorance, or some faulty reasoning which makes him think he can discern in this injustice to the few a benefit to the many. It is the same with the Duke d'Aiguillon, who hanged the Breton peasants by hundreds for refusing to pay their taxes, and who, they say, burst into tears when a child came to ask him to spare the life of his father who had already been hanged; with Chancellor Maupeou who broke our Parliament, and is, withal, an upright judge who would not break a law; and with that Abbé Terray who is ruining us, though he thinks by his edicts and counter-edicts to abolish the national debt and make us the most prosperous among nations. As to that little woman who is governing the King and us, what should we read, I wonder, if we looked into her heart? Wickedness? I doubt it. We

should find a febrile desire to retain the place she has got; a constant and tormenting dread that it will be snatched from her, and an animal resentment towards all whom she suspects of any such intention. But underlying all this be sure there is a well of gratitude ready to gush up towards anybody who will give her a kind word. She would not be a woman if there were not. And, indeed, I have heard she is grateful."

The Chevalier had listened so far with a frowning air of attention and disapproval, but here he interrupted his companion, and said with as much impatience as courtesy would allow: "I can understand indulgence, sir, to all on earth except this one woman, but her I could strangle with my hands as a noxious reptile. There are women who have filled her place and redeemed the disgrace of it by the noble use they made of the power which they had obtained,—Agnes Sorrel, who armed Charles VII. to go and expel the English, and the Duchess of Châteauroux, who sent this very Louis XV. to Fontenoy. But here is a woman as vile on the throne as she was in the slums, and she holds a great nation under her foot! I consider it would be an act pleasing in the sight of heaven to exterminate her."

"Yet I would not establish exceptions to indulgence," observed M. de Saint-Pierre mildly, "else it might be like saying to the exception, 'Every human being shall have fair play save yourself.' However," added he, breaking off as he saw from the Chevalier's features how extremely distasteful was the topic to him, "I have not sought to beguile you into controversy, but only to recommend your not wasting your anger. Who was it that first applied the epithet of generous to anger? Anger is generous when it is levelled at fitting objects, and that is why I would husband it like any other precious thing. Myself, I am past anger, and only wish I could find a few more like myself, ready to succour what misfortunes they meet on their path, yet not prone to lament over our degeneracy nor to advocate violent regeneration. We would form a club and propagate our views, which would tend to show the human race that it is not more ill now than it has always been, and that there is no occasion for despair. As things stand, I am come to Paris to give myself up to literature with my friend M. Rousseau, to whom I will introduce you if you please, though his philosophy, genial as it reads on paper, is often tinged with acidity on its leaving his mouth. This is the fate of worthy men, to speak, at times, with much less kindness than they mean. However, you who are still in the flush of youth require some occupation that will requite you with honours. You have yet five or six years before you need to be grave; so there is time for ambition and" (here one of those smiles which Frenchmen alone know how to give) "for love."

In another minute M. de Saint-Pierre added laughing: "Whatever you may have heard about the degeneracy of the men of our nation, I can promise you that you will find the women unchanged. They never seem to alter for worse or for better."

Whether it was this laugh, or his companion's generally sunny

demeanour, or some cause operating within himself to revive him a little, anyhow the Chevalier rejoined with a half smile :—" I was looking about me for a house in this street, where ten years ago lived one of the sweetest young girls I have ever seen."

"Ten years!" echoed M. de Saint-Pierre.

"Yes, ten years are a long time," assented the Chevalier, rather sadly; "but the recollection of this face would be still as green if I lived to ten times ten years. But the house seems to have gone. . . ."

He stood still and looked.

"You can have no idea," he murmured, "what an element of disquiet that single face introduced into my life, and I still consider that it was the bravest thing I ever did when I found courage to fly from this first love and go to the wars. It was one spring evening I first saw her. I was passing through this street and she was sitting at the open window of the ground-floor, sewing, for the shop was a milliner's. How well I remember that window! There was a pot of mignonette and one of wallflower, and a white kitten sat on the sill and gravely pawed the leaves when a breath of air stirred them, and also made faces at the flies that hovered over her head. Jeanne, the young girl I mean, laid down her work as I came up in order to re-thread her needle. But whether it was that the light was bad or that the needle's eye was stopped, somehow the thread would not pass. She tried once, twice, bit her thread to make it straighter, and then tried a third time; but it was no use, and she dropped her hands, pouting and half crying from the annoyance. I think she would have cried altogether, but just then glancing up, she caught sight of me, who had stood still to watch her. I was smiling of course. She blushed, then laughed, and holding out her needle and thread through the window, said, with arch plaintiveness, 'Ah, monsieur, since you can afford to laugh you can surely thread my needle for me;' so I took and did thread it, and after laughing at me for holding the needle with my left hand instead of my right, she thanked me for my pains, and then went on with her sewing without looking up again. The next day I passed through the street at the same hour; and perhaps she expected me, for she coloured just a little when I lifted my hat to her; and so she did on the third day. But after that, when she saw that I took to passing regularly at the same hour, she affected to bend her head over her work and not to look up as I went by. This she did for a week, notwithstanding that I coughed and stamped and demeaned myself in a hundred indignant ways to attract her attention. So at the end of the week, being mortally piqued by her treatment of me—remember I was not eighteen—I bethought me that I too would go by without taking notice of her. So for another week I always passed on the opposite side of the way, averting my face persistently, and, as I thought, with dignity, from the milliner's shop. 'Surely,' I used to say to myself, 'if she were to go down on her knees to me I would not pay heed to her;' and one day, when I had for the twentieth time taken this unconquerable resolution, I saw her

out of the corner of my eye rise, creep to the window and pretend to drop her work out into the street by accident. My unconquerable resolution vanished in an instant, and I ran over, and, forgetting my dignity and everything else, handed up the work to her. 'Ah, monsieur, it's you!' exclaimed she with a little start and feigning surprise. 'Yes,' I said, miserably, 'it's I, and I don't see why you should tease me as you're doing, and you never look at me when I pass.' 'And forsooth, I'm to look at gentlemen who always go on the opposite side of the road,' said she, with a toss of the head, 'and never so much as doff their hats, thinking themselves too grand no doubt.' 'I am not too grand,' I muttered piteously, and trying to take her hand. 'But other people have their dignity too,' continued she, making believe to draw away: nevertheless she left me her hand at last, just half a second, the time to squeeze it, and told me she would certainly never have anything to do with people who were cross and disagreeable. So I was meek from that day; and feeling her empire over me, she tormented me after a thousand insupportable fashions, now giving me an encouraging glance and raising me to heaven, now refusing to so much as look at me, and plunging me into such paroxysms of despair, that I could have hanged myself. One day, to be even with her for these tortures, I went furiously into the shop where she was working with her company, and, in a rude voice, ordered a smart cap with ribbons. 'For yourself?' asked she, quietly, whilst all the other girls tittered. 'No,' said I, shooting out the words fiercely, 'it's for my mistress, and it must be the prettiest cap that can be had for money.' 'How ugly your mistress must be if she needs such a fine cap as all that!' was her unmoved answer, and I could have beaten her where she stood for her coolness. She laughed at me cruelly, and for many a day after that, about my mistress's cap, which I paid for and tore to pieces at that street corner just yonder; but at length came a time when she did not laugh. I had been in the country for a month without telling her I was going, and when I came back, thinking she would care little enough about my absence and find something teasing to say to me on my return, I saw her sitting at the window looking quite pale and thin. I had come up so quietly, that she did not hear me. She was plying her needle absently, as one who has no heart in her work. I coughed, and she raised her head, saw me, and turned scarlet, then deadly pale again: 'I thought you were ill, monsieur,' she faltered, and dropping her work hastily, rose and ran away."

The Chevalier paused: "Ah me, how far that is now," he murmured, drawing his hand over his forehead—"how far, how far!" and turning with a slight smile and a shrug to his companion: "You will excuse these reminiscences," he said; "they somehow come crowding upon me at this minute—perhaps because this has been my one idyll in life."

"And what came of it?" asked M. de Saint-Pierre, in his friendly tone of interest.

"I went away," answered the Chevalier. "I was too young to marry her. Our stations were also too dissimilar. As to ruining her—well, I

loved the child, and I reasoned with myself that it would not be love if I rendered her unhappy for life in order to make myself happy for a few years. So as the opportunity for going abroad offered itself, I embraced it and went away. . . ."

M. de Saint-Pierre nodded benevolently, though, amiable man as he was, he did not quite seem to understand this scruple, which was rather foreign to the habits of the eighteenth century.

"And have you never heard from her since?" he asked.

"Never," replied the Chevalier; "and now even the house where she lived seems gone. Yes, it was there," nodded he, pointing over the way, "between that milliner's yonder with the sign of the 'Golden Distaff,' and that other milliner's with a white name painted on the door. Do you know, monsieur, I feel strangely tempted to go and make inquiries at that 'Golden Distaff,' and inquire how it comes that the house has been pulled down?"

M. de Saint-Pierre was essentially a man of the world. He divined that in such an expedition as this his companion would probably prefer being alone, and accordingly pretended a desire to go and apprise a friend of his, who lived near the Place Royale, that he had arrived in Paris. "It is a little late," remarked he, drawing a monster gold turnip from his fob, "but reason the more for hurrying." He took leave of the Chevalier with an amicable grasp of the hand, and said, in doing so, "We will breakfast together to-morrow, Chevalier; and I hope I may persuade you to go to Versailles and try your luck with the Duke d'Aiguillon, as you would have done with the Duke de Choiseul. I doubt not you will be as well received by the one as you would have been by the other. Brave men are welcome everywhere!"

Left alone, the Chevalier crossed the street. It was past nine, and the profoundest silence reigned around, save for the occasional striking of a church clock, and the distant snarling of dogs wrangling over the bones which the citizens of Paris threw out in heaps in front of their doors at eventide. The shop of the "Golden Distaff" was closed, but, looking through a chink in the shutters, the Chevalier saw three girls of eighteen, or thereabouts, working under the superintendence of a ripe matron, their employer. He knocked, and after a minute's delay and some audible whispering, the matronly voice cried out in astonished tones, "Who's there?" "Customer," answered the Chevalier. Another pause, and the door was timidly held ajar, though at the sight of the stranger muffled in his cloak and booted, a panic was like to have ensued, and the three young milliners started up and ran into a corner, like affrighted poultry. But the stranger strode in, uncovered himself, and asked so civilly for a pair of ruffles that their fears were appeased. Only there then followed a repetition of the smothered tittering which had been indulged in by Mlle. Jacqueline, on account of the stranger's wigless condition. The milliners thought it even odder than the serving-maid had done, and their mirth only subsided when the customer, having paid for his ruffles,

inquired suddenly about the shop of Dame Collet, who had formerly lodged next door.

The matron milliner was a fussy little body, who dearly loved gossip, especially with strangers, to whom her communications came with the zest of novelty.

"Oh, mon Dieu, monsieur," she exclaimed, beating down her skirts, and taking a pinch of snuff as if to prepare for a long spell of chatting: "my neighbour Collet's place has been demolished these three years and more. God save us!"

"I saw it had been demolished," remarked the stranger.

"Yes, monsieur," said the matron, wiping her spectacles with her gown. "You can understand that they as have become high and mighty don't like to be reminded of the place where they was nobodies."

"Then Madame Collet made her fortune?"

"Why she has, too, of course, monsieur; but it's not of her I'm speaking. Lor' bless me, no! but of that little chit that used to work with her—that demoiselle Jeannette Lange."

"Jeannette Lange!" cried the stranger, with a start, and speaking in such astounded accents that there was a new panic and a good deal of staring on the part of the sempstresses. "Jeannette Lange! Why, what of her, madame?"

The matron placed her spectacles on the bridge of her nose, and speaking with the utmost deliberation, answered: "Why, where can you have come from, monsieur, not to have heard that Jeannette Lange has become the Marquise du Barry, and, to all intents and purposes, Queen of France?"

III.

The Chevalier de Lafeuille did not sleep that night. Towards eleven a watchman met him wandering in the middle of Paris, and fled from him, knowing that a man could be up to no good at that late hour of the night. Further on he came upon another watchman's lantern, but in this case, the watchmen attached to the lantern being two, they arrested him, and asked him his business. He tossed them some money and bade them go to the devil, an injunction which they obeyed by going half-way, that is, towards one of those drink-shops that remained open all night for the benefit of cut-purses, belated gamblers, and market-gardeners who came into Paris after midnight to sell their produce at early morning. It was not till long past two that, after driftless wanderings through half the streets of the right side of the Seine, he found himself unexpectedly opposite the Hôtel d'Artois again. Seeing which he knocked, roused Mlle. Jacqueline from her mattress bed on the kitchen-table, was admitted by that damsel, and made mechanically for his room, forgetting to beg a light of the maid, and throwing himself, dressed and booted as he was, on his bed. The moon that was shining full into the room, stocked with old and pretentious inn furniture, threw on his face a

cadaverous hue, and made him seem like some embalmed corpse sleeping in a chamber that had not for years been opened. For a while he remained perfectly motionless, fixing his eyes on the tester, and dreaming wide awake. Then, towards four, he suddenly paced the room with quick steps, and pausing every now and then to mop away the perspiration that was oozing from his brow. At five he flung himself on the bed again, and remained there till daylight broke; then he got up, with a feverish, wild expression on his face.

"Jeannette Lange!" he muttered to himself: "it's this girl whom I loved and spared, who is standing between France and happiness! It's she whom I thought too humble to wed who has a King at her feet and is employing her power to make of France the derision and pity of Europe. I understand now those ships which I saw rotting, begun but abandoned, in the docks of Havre; those disbanded soldiers whom we passed coming along in the coach: they were the fleets and armies that Choiseul was preparing, and which this Du Barry has flung aside, so as to have more money for her court orgies. And then the tattered peasants I beheld, and those stories of once well-to-do farmers who are obliged to bury their gold for fear of tax-gatherers, who take all they can find, not only what they are entitled to! I set light store by them, thinking they were inventions; but they are true!" He paced to and fro, and then stopped abruptly, as if arrested by a spring. "One life!" he exclaimed vehemently and with the exultation of fanaticism—"one life against a whole kingdom's prosperity, and I should hesitate! No! by the God above us, I will murder that woman! . . ."

At breakfast, M. de Saint-Pierre found his new friend pale and pensive, but collected. After the repast, which was enlivened by the queries of Mademoiselle Jacqueline as to whether it was the rats that had made the gentleman so noisy and sleepless through the night, the Chevalier broached gravely to his companion that he should like to go to Versailles, as suggested, and try his fortune with the Prime Minister, if so be that he could obtain an introduction. How get that? M. de Saint-Pierre was not at a loss for means. He knew several among the literary fraternity—MM. Diderot, Rousseau, and a number more who had a footing in the palaces of the mighty. They would go by-and-by to the Café Procope, which was the resort of all the wits, and with such antecedents as the Chevalier's it would not be difficult to obtain an introduction. "Only"—and here M. de Saint-Pierre glanced with a hesitating smile at the Chevalier's coat and his head of hair—"only, as Prime Ministers were sometimes particular about the fashions—" "Yes," answered the Chevalier, "I understand; we will go first to the tailor's."

They went to the tailor, who shuddered from head to foot, but made allowances, when he found that this fearfully dressed man came from India. Tailors in those days, like certain of their descendants in later times, generally had somewhere in their drawers a suit that had been made for some customer of distinction, who had inopportunately died on the day before the

clothes should have been sent home. One of these suits the tailor produced from out of a wrapper of holland cloth; and a very brilliant suit it was—maroon velvet and gold, with hat to match, and a magnificent roquelaure cloak with a deep lappet of sable fur to the collar. Price of all this, a trifle—950 silver pounds. The Chevalier paid in banking bills, and proceeded to a hairdresser's, who dropped a pair of curling tongs into a basin of soapsuds from sheer amazement at the sight of him, looked at him, turned him round, and eventually planted him into a chair, where he clipped off every particle of his hair, fitted him with a periwig worth twelve English guineas, and then retired into the privacy of his chamber to muse upon the spectacle which it had been given him to see in the seventy-third year of the eighteenth century. Less than a couple of hours after breakfast the Chevalier was dressed, be-powdered, be-ruffled and gloved in such wise that Mlle. Jacqueline stood bolt still with her broom on the kitchen doorway as she saw him go out on his way to the Café Procope with his friend M. de Saint-Pierre, and remained thoughtfully the whole day afterwards.

It was New Year's Day, and the streets of Paris were crowded with plaything-vendors, ambulating cakemen, and strolling singers of "Noels"—Christmas carols, as we should call it in English. The weather was so clear, sharp, and golden, the holiday-throngs—wishing each other God-speed—so merry and lusty-voiced, that good M. de Saint-Pierre was in as fresh spirits as a school-boy, and raised his hat frequently, wishing a happy new year to people who jostled him. The Chevalier said little; but meeting with a gunsmith's near the churchyard of the Innocents, he drew from his pockets the pair of pistols without which men in those days seldom ventured to travel, and begged his companion to excuse him whilst he went in to buy new flints.

"Are you, then, afraid of the society of the Café Procope?" laughed M. de Saint-Pierre, when the Chevalier returned. "Men of letters sometimes pass for bears; but I don't think bears are dangerous."

"Carrying arms is a traveller's habit," answered the Chevalier, quietly.

The Café Procope, in the Rue des Fossés St. Germain,* was the oldest and most famous coffee-house in Paris, and faced the Théâtre Français of that day, since removed to the building where the Opera used to be. It was a small, black and low-ceilinged establishment; but as none of the coffee-houses of Paris were then particularly brilliant, this one was accounted, with reason, the showiest of them all. It was the meeting-place of everybody who was anything in literature or science. The master of the place pointed out the table (which still exists) where M. de Voltaire used to write, and he might have likewise called attention to the tables, inkstands, or sand-horns that had been used, turn by turn, by all the writers who have shed lustre on the eighteenth century. When the

* Modern Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie.

Chevalier and his friend entered, one of the call-boys from the play-house opposite had just come in and posted to the pillar over one of the stoves that day's play-bill; and the Chevalier read the announcement of M. de Voltaire's tragedy of *Tancrède*, to be performed by the comedians-in-ordinary to the King. Next this bill was another of the Opéra Comique, advertising *Rose et Colas*, by M. Michel Jean Sédaine, and music by M. Monsigny. M. de Saint-Pierre at once nudged his companion, and pointed to a slim, intelligent young man conversing with another, extremely ugly, and younger than himself.

"That's M. Sédaine," said he; "let us go and talk with him a moment. He is in high favour with the Princess, Marie Antoinette, Duchesse de Berry, the future Queen of France."

"And the other young man?" asked the Chevalier, feeling more attracted towards the second youth's monkeyish visage than towards M. Sédaine's prim features.

"Oh, that other! he's a worthless scapegrace, who is grieving an excellent father by his follies. He will come to no good. His name is the Count of Mirabeau."

A servant in livery, who was the waiter, came and asked the two gentlemen what they would be pleased to order. The introduction of the Chevalier to M. Sédaine was then taking place. M. de Saint-Pierre ordered hot wine and sugar for four, and then continued the introduction to the Count of Mirabeau.

"I bring you, gentlemen," said he, "a traveller, who is concerned about the condition of France."

"And need enough, sir," laughed the young Count of Mirabeau, catching up off the table the sheet of printed candle-paper which then did duty for the *Gazette de France*. "My tailor told me yester even that he could give me no further credit, times being bad."

"Bah!" smiled M. Sédaine; "tailors are like women—you can fly without harm from one to the other."

"Here is M. Crébillon," remarked M. de Mirabeau, as that aged and most polished sinner walked in, distributing hand-shakings to right and left. "I venerate that old man for the austerity of his principles."

"Take pattern by him then," said M. Sédaine, to which M. de Mirabeau replied by bowing very respectfully to M. Crébillon, who waved his hand politely to him and wreathed his shrewd old face in smiles.

"M. Sédaine," said the Chevalier de Lafeuille, who, not knowing that his interlocutor had been a stonemason before becoming a dramatist, wondered much at the vast size of his hands—"M. Sédaine, you see before you a man who is almost a stranger to his own country, and who wishes to be helped on the road to Versailles."

"Nothing easier, sir," said M. Sédaine, taking from the tray which the servant brought one of the glasses of hot wine. The four gentlemen hobnobbed, and M. Sédaine added: "I can be of some small help to you; but one who formed part of the immortal Canadian legion, as M. de Saint-

Pierre informs me you did, needs no introduction anywhere ;" saying which he bowed.

" So I tell him," remarked M. de Saint-Pierre.

" Monsieur fought in Canada ? " inquired M. de Mirabeau, pausing half-way to the bottom of his glass.

" And he comes fresh from India," added M. de Saint-Pierre, not displeased to chaperone so universal a traveller.

The words India and Canada were immediately repeated aloud by the young Count of Mirabeau. They buzzed about from mouth to mouth, and in less than a minute the Chevalier found himself the cynosure of the whole room.

Not much delighted at this, and caring little to be lionized for the benefit of all who might honour the Café Procope with their custom that afternoon, he turned to M. Sédaine, and asked him, with an earnestness which that man of letters thought at least peculiar, whether there would not be means of being introduced to somebody or other at Versailles that very day.

" It is M. le Chevalier's desire to serve his country without loss of time," explained M. de Saint-Pierre, benignly ; " though, truly, this ambition to begin on New Year's Day seems a little like excess of patriotism."

" The Chevalier de Boufflers holds a levee to-day," remarked M. Sédaine, after reflecting a moment. " M. de Lafeuille has probably heard of M. de Boufflers ? "

M. de Lafeuille had not heard of M. de Boufflers ; but his maroon velvet coat and his periwig were giving him self-possession : so he answered that he had.

" The Chevalier is himself a courtier of the Muses," proceeded M. Sédaine, in the classico-pedantic phraseology of the time, " and he is a noble patron to literature. I personally am much beholden to him. If Monsieur de Lafeuille will honour me with his company, we can pay our respects together to the Chevalier, who is at this moment in Paris, habiting M. le Duc de Richelieu's villa on the Boulevards. But it will be of no use to go till two hours' time—that is, at three—for M. de Chevalier is not an early riser."

The Chevalier de Lafeuille regretted that M. de Boufflers was not an early riser ; but he made his acknowledgments, and, being condemned by the force of circumstances to wait two hours, took up his standpoint near the stove, and resigned himself to that species of martyrdom which consists in being accosted by persons one does not know, being questioned about things one has never learned, and congratulated warmly for high deeds one has never performed. It was lucky that the café was fast filling, and that the wagging of tongues was so continuous, else the Chevalier would never have come out of the ordeal either to his own satisfaction or to that of his interlocutors. As it was, not hearing half the questions, he was unable to answer them, and so earned at once a

character for discretion and modesty that did him no harm. Great questioners usually admire the qualities in which they most fail themselves.

It must not be supposed, however, that the mobbing of M. de Lafeuille was quite the thing which a modern incident of that kind would be. The mobbers kept their distance, standing in a double half-circle opposite the stove, with their hats under their arms, and their snuff-boxes passing smoothly but ceaselessly from hand to hand. The Chevalier was surprised at the freedom of their speech, nobody seeming to care a button either for M. de Sartine or for that worthy gentleman's agents. The King was attacked, and in no measured terms; so were M. Terray and M. Maupeou; so most of all was Madame du Barry, who, not appreciating literature like her predecessor, Madame de Pompadour, had from the first day of her rise stirred the whole Café Procope about her ears like a hornet's nest—poor woman!

The Chevalier listened with ears intent whilst Madame du Barry was being handled. "She is really all you paint her?" he inquired suddenly of a young man, shabbily dressed, and with a really evil cast of countenance, who had just come in, and was joining in the conversation with a voice like the yelping of a cur's.

"I? I didn't paint her at all," answered the young man cautiously, and scanning the Chevalier's fine clothes with a mistrustful eye.

"No, it was I who sketched the lady," replied a gentleman very splendidly arrayed, who showed a laughing set of teeth as he spoke and seemed to wonder a little at the great interest the stranger displayed in the conversation. "Monsieur Marat," added he, with a glance at the evil young man, "Monsieur Marat is ever prudent."

"It is not everybody who can light upon the secret of enriching himself whilst pretending to reform humanity," rejoined M. Marat with venomous irony. "If M. de Beaumarchais were a doctor to the Count of Artois's grooms instead of being simply the doctor of his own fortunes and of other people's morals, he would be prudent too."

There was a sort of titter, for it is not in literary nature to be over fond of a successful brother who has made his fortune so rapidly as the author of *Les Deux Amis* had; but M. de Beaumarchais bore the repartee very good-naturedly, merely saying to a M. Prévile, chief comic actor of the Théâtre Français, who had been loudest among the titters: "My dear M. Prévile, when a man is exposed at any moment to catch a certain infirmity, he should beware of laughing at it. I doubt whether our friend M. Marat is ever likely to be afflicted with the plague of riches, but *you* may be if I may credit the rumours which describe you as being such a keen man of business where your own interests are concerned;" and with this thrust at the well-known rapacity of M. Prévile,* and a bow to the Chevalier, he turned gracefully on his heel.

* An idea of the actor Prévile's rapacity may be formed from this fact, that in renewing his engagement with the Théâtre Français in 1771, he stipulated for no less a salary than 4,000 francs, 160*l.* modern money!

Young Marat watched him go, and then croaked in the ear of young M. de Mirabeau, who was standing next him and still conning over his *Gazette de France*: "I like frankness, and to see a man's life tally with his words"

"Ahem! we should some of us lead strange lives if that were the rule," laughed young Mirabeau looking up. "Witness our good M. Crébillon yonder."

"I mean to say," rejoined Marat with splenetic vehemence, "that when a man gives himself out for a censor of others he should censure his own life to begin with. There are plenty among us," added he, or rather hissed he aloud, "who are ready with specifics for the cure of social maladies, but I have never met one, save M. Rousseau, who thought it worth while to commence by healing himself; and even in the case of M. Rousseau, it is riches who fly him I suspect, not he who flees riches. We are ill enough and broken enough, heaven knows! We are on the point of national death, and we want about us no musk-scented physicians, with bated breath and honeyed phrases, who will veil the truth and so add infatuation to our other perils, but grim surgeons with strong hands and keen eyes, who will lay their knives to our sores and make us sound in the only way possible—that is, by making us suffer."

This was not by any means a cheerful speech, and it threw a decided chill upon the half-circle. "M. Marat's language smells of the pharmacy," observed young M. Mirabeau with a shudder: "it is too medicinal;" and somebody else remarked pleasantly that he would rather entrust his enemy to the medical care of M. Marat than his own self. But to the astonishment of everybody, the modest and discreet Chevalier de Lafeuille, who had listened with sparkling eyes whilst the young doctor spoke, turned to him abruptly with hand outstretched and said deliberately: "Monsieur, I agree with you and honour you for your remarks. They have given me a spur I needed."

M. Marat limply and suspiciously extended a dusky paw, and suffered it to be gripped as if in a gauntlet. At this moment, M. Sédaine, who could make nothing whatever of this little scene, drew an enamelled watch from his fob and touched the Chevalier's arm: "I think, M. le Chevalier," said he, "we can be going now."

So the waiter in livery was summoned and paid for by M. de Saint-Pierre for the four glasses of sugared wine at the rate of three sous the glass; and then, this menial having received with gratitude a vail of one sou for himself, was commissioned to go and fetch either a hackney-coach or two sedan-chairs, whichever should be most easy to find. It was the coach that by hazard proved the easiest. One rattled up within a few minutes, to the great contentment of a few street boys, who gathered without the door to see the unwonted sight. M. de Saint-Pierre then ceremoniously confided his new friend to big-handed, big-hearted M. Sédaine, and wished him success: to which parting salute the Chevalier answered with the somewhat enigmatic words: "Whatever happens, I shall have sought my country's good, not my own."

"He looks a little wild," remarked one Encyclopædian to another a minute or so afterwards, when the coach had jumped off. "There is something shifty and dreamy in his eyes."

"Yes, there is," answered the second Encyclopædian, pensively. "And do you know he reminded me very strangely of a man who was a zealot and made some stir fifteen years ago."

"Who?"

"Why, I mean Damiens, who tried to murder the king, and was drawn and quartered for it."

"Ugh!" shivered the young Count of Mirabeau; "the talk is not festive this afternoon. I shall go over the way and see if there are any actresses in the green-room."

IV.

It was close upon three when the Chevalier de Lafeuille, with his literary chaperon, left the Café Procope, and by seven o'clock the same evening he was at Versailles, crossing the state court-yard in the coach of M. le Chevalier de Boufflers, one of the most consummate gentlemen of his time. M. de Boufflers was about five-and-thirty, but, thanks to excessive dissipation, which seems to act upon some men as a preservative, looked at least five years younger. He and the aged Duke de Richelieu, whom he devoutly took as his mentor, were the two men who had most deserved by their acts to be laid up with palsy, delirium tremens, and all other infirmities, and who yet were the soundest in health and limb of all the King's court. M. de Boufflers had originally been destined for a priestly life, but branching off from this career, which had struck him as being an unexciting one, he had taken to soldiering, and on New Year's Day, '72, had just been appointed to the coloneley of the first hussar regiment ever formed in France. He was rich, handsome, as generous as if he were poor, a lover of women, of wine, and of poetry, brave as a matadore, witty, and full of urbanity of the most princely kind. No wonder that he was popular, and that on the days when he threw the doors of his mansion open, people trooped up his staircases as if they were going to the play.

Nothing could have been grander and yet more charming than the way in which he had received M. Sédaine and his protégé. The man of letters had had no need to say much in favour of the man of the sword. At the first hint of Canada, and the brave legion that went out to succour it, he had extended both arms, and embracing M. de Lafeuille French fashion, had kissed him on both cheeks. Then, when he had ascertained what service it was the Chevalier expected of him, he had exclaimed with effusion that he certainly should not sleep that night until he had taken M. de Lafeuille to Versailles, introduced him to the Duke d'Aiguillon, and begged for him a captaincy in his, M. de Boufflers', own regiment. "Are you, at least, a Knight of Saint Louis, Monsieur le Chevalier?" he had added; to which M. de Lafeuille had been obliged to answer no, and

that his title of Chevalier was hereditary, he being grandson to a baron. "Well, more shame to those who dispense our orders of chivalry not to have included you in the distribution," had rejoined M. de Boufflers; "but I will see to this." And it was in this agreeable fashion that the two officers had started for Versailles in company.

On alighting, two pages in the royal liveries, white and light blue, took their cloaks from MM. de Boufflers and Lafeuille; and it was then the latter remarked, for the first time, the full and amazing magnificence of the former's costume. He was attired in peach-coloured silk, with waistcoat and breeches of white satin, and his ruffles, fall, and handkerchief border were of Mechlin lace, so splendid that even one of the Jews of the Rue Quincampoix would have paid for them twenty times their weight in gold. The Chevalier's sword-hilt (for swords, though out of fashion in daily costume, were still compulsory at court), his shoe and knee-buckles, his solitaire, and his cross of St. Louis, were incrustated with large diamonds; and the belt that held up his sword was overlaid altogether with amethysts and small brilliants. On three or four of his fingers he wore rings set with stones of extraordinary size and beauty; his snuff-box was also one coruscating mass of jewels; and in guise of watch-chain he carried six rows of pearls, fastened together with emerald links, and terminated by a seal which was itself an enormous emerald, engraved. When people talked of a tailor's and jeweller's bill in those days, the term had some meaning. M. de Lafeuille, inured as he was to splendour by the sight of some native princes it had been given him to behold in India, was, nevertheless, for a moment dazzled by all this show of glory; but quickly recovering, he muttered to himself that it was all the more pity a nobleman so fair and brave should be about to bow his head before a woman like that ex-*sempstress*, now queen. For the Chevalier, on the drive down from Paris, had left him no doubt as to his intentions on the subject. Chattily, and as though it were a matter of course, he had apprised M. Lafeuille that it was entirely to Madame du Barry that he owed his colonelcy. He had paid his court to her, flattered her, carried her lap-dog for her, and so forth. She had deigned to be pleased with his zeal, and had ordered the King to reward him. That was how he had risen. "And now," said he, flinging some grains of snuff off his ruffles, "I am going to wish her and his Majesty a happy new year; and if I can find M. le Maréchal Duc de Richelieu, my patron, to introduce you, Monsieur, to the Marquise, your fortune will be half made." "Is the Marchioness's favour then the only road to promotion in this country?" inquired M. de Lafeuille. "Oh, yes, indeed, the only one," answered M. de Boufflers, quite gravely, and without suspecting any hidden meaning in the question: "she appoints bishops, marshals, and ministers, makes war or peace, and sends whom-ever she pleases either to fortune or the Bastille. You will see around her this evening everybody who wants anything; and everybody wants something in these days."

The rules of etiquette were very formal as to presentations at court,

yét the way was smooth before any one who had borne a King's commission, or was of gentle blood, or who, as in this instance, was introduced by the Chevalier de Boufflers. Without seeming to do so, M. de Boufflers had questioned M. de Lafeuille just enough to learn from him that his grandfather the Baron was alive, and that he, the Chevalier, his heir, had an independent fortune, allowing him to live with comfort anywhere. This was enough, even then, to constitute respectability, and M. de Boufflers, in escorting his friend up to the Grande Galerie des Glacés, where the King's New Year's reception was to be held, informed him that nothing would be necessary but to give his name, and that of his ancestral estate, to the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, whom they would meet on the top of the principal staircase—which was accordingly done—the Grand Master answering by a slight inclination of the head, and bidding the two gentlemen go and take their places according to their rank in the reception-room.

The Galerie des Glaces was crowded as they entered by an immense, but whispering, throng, who lined the two sides of the hall three deep, but allowed a clear space down the middle for the King and his Court, when they should pass. A half-dozen chamberlains with white wands, and golden keys hooked to the small of their backs, flitted about ranging everybody, lords, ladies, generals, prelates, and simple gentlemen according to their several degrees. One of these politic beings lightly touched M. de Lafeuille with his wand, and pointed him to a place very low down, near the door of exit; but on M. de Boufflers remarking quietly, "Monsieur is with me, and will stand with the Knights of St. Louis," the chamberlain smirked and offered no further remark. M. de Lafeuille was accordingly stationed in the front row, in a conspicuous position with noblemen to the right and left of him and behind him; and, standing there with throbbing temples amid the whisperings growing each moment fewer as the time for the King's entry approached, he asked himself for the first time how he was going to perform this startling deed which he meditated. There was a dash of the energumen in all the people who had any very decided opinions upon politics during the last century, and regicide, or the murder of a King's mistress, was a thought that germinated in a man's head much more promptly than it would do in these cooler days; but the Chevalier de Lafeuille, as he surveyed all the brilliant and gilded host that encircled him, and thought what a pretty to-do there would be when he stepped suddenly out and discharged one of his pistols at the woman to whom all in this room looked as the arbitress of their destinies, felt for the first time in his life a sensation closely bordering on cowardice. His throat became parched and his brow was moistened. Mechanically he plunged his right hand into his pocket and felt for his pistols, and at this moment M. de Boufflers, leaning towards him with a charming smile, whispered that one of his hands was ungloved, which was contrary to etiquette. M. de Lafeuille had not proceeded half-way towards rectifying this mistake, when the double folding-doors at the end of the room were thrown wide open, and the Grand Chamberlain, with

chain of gold round his neck, and jewelled wand in hand, entered, made three steps forward, and said, "Gentlemen, the King!"

The whispers lapsed at once into a dead lull. The Grand Chamberlain turned, faced the doors through which he had come, and began walking backwards, bowing as he did so. The Chevalier de Lafeuille, feeling his heart throb as if it would leap into his mouth, strained his eyes, and saw at a few yards before this functionary a stout man, rather above the middle height, with good-natured *blasé* features and eyes full of languor, sensuality, and indifference. He walked slowly, very conspicuous from his broad blue ribbon of the Holy Spirit and his kingly star of brilliants, and he leaned—partly on account of age, partly owing to his high-heeled shoes—on a cane with an enormous gold head. In his other hand he carried an embroidered cambric handkerchief, which he lifted very slightly when he wished particularly to acknowledge the salute of anybody. This was his bow. He never raised his hat nor bent his head more than a third part of an inch. There was a surprising air of majesty in this demeanour. People might be as disloyal and levelling as they chose; but at the sight of this finely-dressed gentleman, walking in such quiet consciousness of his own greatness, heads were bowed instinctively. As the King walked, not a man but bent double, not a woman but curtsied as if she were going to sink into the floor.

The Chevalier de Lafeuille, whose head was in a whirl, did like the rest. He had barely had time to catch sight of the splendid vision of the King and of the galaxy of fair women and bejewelled lords behind him, when it seemed to him the whole Court was already opposite where he stood; and yet the King had taken full ten minutes to come down to the place where M. de Lafeuille was stationed, for on his way he had paused a moment before the Duke de Richelieu, to whom he had given his hand to kiss, and then before the Princes of Soubise, of Guemenée and of Beauvau, on whom he had bestowed a similar compliment, and again before one or two other great noblemen, to each of whom he had said a few words; then he had resumed his slow walk, until he came to the Chevalier de Boufflers. M. de Lafeuille, whose eyes were dimmed to such a point that he was utterly unable to recognize anybody or to perceive what a singular figure he himself cut with his glove but half drawn on, bowed again without knowing what he was doing; and then a sudden feeling of iciness seized and shook him as if in an ague, for the King was speaking to the Chevalier de Boufflers and saying, with lazy graciousness:—"Monsieur de Boufflers, you have heard that we have named you Colonel of our regiment of Hussars."

"I am deeply grateful to your Majesty," answered the Chevalier, bending low and with his hand on his breast. Then there was a pause, and with that respectful boldness which can only come of a long familiarity with courts, the Chevalier said: "Sire, I have near me a gentleman who has faithfully served your Majesty in Canada—Monsieur le Chevalier de Lafeuille."

The King gave an almost imperceptible frown at the mention of Canada ; but behind him to the right there was a sudden start and a rustling of silk. A woman's voice exclaimed, in muffled tones : " *Le Chevalier de Lafeuille !* " and the same moment the Chevalier's idyll stood before him.

He was far from thoughts of murder now. Her beauty was such as would have disarmed wild beasts. All that high station and queenly attire can do to enhance the loveliness of woman had been done for her, and he gazed at her dumbly fascinated, like a man who cannot take his eyes off the sun. She was a little pale, and her fan seemed to tremble in her hand ; but the embarrassment of the recognition only lasted an instant. Fixing her liquid blue eyes on him, she stepped to the King's side and said, in a tone so respectful that the tinge of command in it was apparent only to the initiated, and the shade of emotion in it to nobody, " Sire, M. de Lafeuille is one of your Majesty's bravest officers, and he is not yet a knight of St. Louis."

" You are a Knight of St. Louis from this moment, monsieur," said the King, contemplating him with somewhat of languid wonder.

" And, sire, there is the colonelcy of your Majesty's regiment of Royal Flanders vacant." She was gazing at him as fixedly as ever.

" It is our pleasure that you shall take the command of this regiment, monsieur," said the King resignedly, and looking as if he would now move on.

In another instant the whole cortège had swept by, and there was nothing left to the Chevalier in the shape of presence of mind but the recollection of that last look which the Marquise du Barry had thrown him—a look destined to linger with him to his dying hour. He was roused by Monsieur de Boufflers, who for the second time that day threw his arms round his neck and embraced him.

V.

Some six months after, good M. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre entering the Café Procope was accosted by young M. de Mirabeau, who said lightly : " And your friend who used to talk about regeneration and had such murderous eyes——"

" I went to visit him yesterday at Versailles," answered M. de Saint-Pierre, laughing a little ; " he was duly installed in his apartments as Colonel of the Guard in waiting on the Duke de Berry, and was smoking a pipe of tobacco, a practice he has brought with him from the Orient."

" And he talks little about regeneration I'll warrant me ? " sneered young Doctor Marat.

" Well," smiled M. de Saint-Pierre, " I think we may perhaps say, his talk on the subject has ended——"

" In smoke," laughed M. de Mirabeau.

Gambling Superstitions.

It might be supposed that those who are most familiar with the actual results which present themselves in long series of chance-games would form the most correct views respecting the conditions on which such results depend,—would be, in fact, freest from all superstitious ideas respecting chance or luck. The gambler who sees every system—his own infallible system included—foiled by the run of events, who witnesses the discomfiture of one gamester after another that for a time had seemed irresistibly lucky, and who can number by the hundred those who have been ruined by the love of play, might be expected to recognize the futility of all attempts to anticipate the results of chance combinations. It is, however, but too well known that the reverse is the case. The more familiar a man becomes with the multitude of such combinations, the more confidently he believes in the possibility of foretelling,—not, indeed, any special event, but the general run of several approaching events. There has never been a successful gambler who has not believed that his success (temporary though such success ever is, where games of pure chance are concerned) has been the result of skilful conduct on his own part; and there has never been a ruined gambler (though ruined gamblers are to be counted by thousands) who has not believed that when ruin overtook him he was on the very point of mastering the secret of success. It is this fatal confidence which gives to gambling its power of fascinating the lucky as well as the unlucky. The winner continues to tempt fortune, believing all the while that he is exerting some special aptitude for games of chance, until the inevitable change of luck arrives; and thereafter he continues to play because he believes that his luck has only deserted him for a time, and must presently return. The unlucky gambler, on the contrary, regards his losses as sacrifices to ensure the ultimate success of his "system," and even when he has lost his all, continues firm in the belief that had he had more money to sacrifice he could have bound fortune to his side for ever.

We propose to consider some of the most common gambling superstitions,—noting, at the same time, that like superstitions prevail respecting chance events (or what is called fortune) even among those who never gamble.

Houdin, in his interesting book, *Les Tricheries des Grecs dévoilées*, has given some amusing instances of the fruits of long gambling experience. "They are presented," says Steinmetz, from whose work, *The Gaming-Table*, we quote them, "as the axioms of a professional gambler and cheat." Thus we might expect that, however unsatisfactory to men of honest mind,

they would at least savour of a certain sort of wisdom. Yet these axioms, the fruit of long study directed by self-interest, are all utterly untrustworthy.

"Every game of chance," says this authority, "presents two kinds of chances which are very distinct,—namely, those relating to the person interested, that is the player; and those inherent in the combinations of the game." That is, we are to distinguish between the chances proper to the game, and those depending on the luck of the player. Proceeding to consider the chances proper to the game itself, our friendly cheat sums them all up in two rules. First: "Though chance can bring into the game all possible combinations, there are, nevertheless, certain limits at which it seems to stop: such, for instance, as a certain number turning up ten times in succession at roulette; this is possible, but it has never happened." Secondly: "In a game of chance, the oftener the same combination has occurred in succession, the nearer we are to the certainty that it will not recur at the next cast or turn up. This is the most elementary of the theories on probabilities; it is termed *the maturity of the chances*" (and he might have added that the belief in this elementary theory had ruined thousands). "Hence," he proceeds, "a player must come to the table not only 'in luck,' but he must not risk his money except at the instant prescribed by the rules of the maturity of the chances." Then follow the precepts for personal conduct:—"For gaming prefer roulette, because it presents several ways of staking your money—which permits the study of several. A player should approach the gaming-table perfectly calm and cool—just as a merchant or tradesman in treaty about any affair. If he gets into a passion it is all over with prudence, all over with good luck—for the demon of bad luck invariably pursues a passionate player. Every man who finds a pleasure in playing runs the risk of losing.* A prudent player, before undertaking anything, should put himself to the test to discover if he is 'in vein' or in luck. In all doubt he should abstain. There are several persons who are constantly pursued by bad luck: to such I say—*never play*. Stubbornness at play is ruin. Remember that Fortune does not like people to be overjoyed at her favours, and that she prepares bitter deceptions for the imprudent who are intoxicated by success. Lastly, before risking your money at play, study your 'vein,' and the different probabilities of the game—termed, as aforesaid, the maturity of the chances."

Before proceeding to exhibit the fallacy of the principles here enunciated—principles which have worked incalculable mischief—it may be well for us to sketch the history of the scamp who enunciated them,—so far, at least, as his gambling successes are concerned. His first meeting with Houdin took place at a subscription ball, where he managed to fleece

* This *naïve* admission would appear, as we shall presently see, to have been the fruit of genuine experience on our gambler's part: it only requires that, for the words "runs the risk," we should read "incurs the certainty," to be incontrovertible.

Houdin "and others to a considerable amount, contriving a dexterous escape when detected. Houdin afterwards fell in with him at Spa, where he found the gambler in the greatest poverty, and lent him a small sum—to practise his grand theories." This sum the gambler lost, and Houdin advised him "to take up a less dangerous occupation." It was on this occasion, it would seem, that the gambler revealed to Houdin the particulars recorded in his book. "A year afterwards Houdin unexpectedly fell in with him again; but this time the fellow was transformed into what is called a '*demi-millionaire*,' having succeeded to a large fortune on the death of his brother, who died intestate. According to Houdin, the following was the man's declaration at the auspicious meeting:—'I have,' he said, 'completely renounced gaming; I am rich enough; and care no longer for fortune. And yet,' he added proudly, 'if I now cared for the thing, how I could break those bloated banks in their pride, and what a glorious vengeance I could take of bad luck and its inflexible agents! But my heart is too full of my happiness to allow the smallest place for the desire of vengeance.'" Three years later he died; and Houdin informs us that he left the whole of his fortune to various charitable institutions, his career after his acquisition of wealth going far to demonstrate the justice of Becky Sharp's theory, that it is easy to be honest on five thousand a year.

It is remarkable that the principles enunciated above are not merely erroneous, but self-contradictory. Yet it is to be noticed that though they are presented as the outcome of a life of gambling experiences, they are in reality entertained by all gamblers, however limited their experience, as well as by many who are only prevented by the lack of opportunity from entering the dangerous path which has led so many to ruin. These contradictory superstitions may be called severally,—the gambler's belief in his own good luck, and his faith in the turn of luck. When he is considering his own fortune he does not hesitate to believe that on the whole the Fates will favour him, though this belief implies in reality the *persistence* of favourable conditions. On the contrary, when he is considering the fortunes of others who are successful in their play against him, he does not doubt that their good luck will presently desert them, that is, he believes in the *non-persistence* of favourable conditions in their case.

Taking in their order the gambling superstitions which have been presented above, we have first of all, to inquire what truth there is in the idea that there are limits beyond which pure chance has no power of introducing peculiar combinations. Let us consider this hypothesis in the light of actual experience. Mr. Steinmetz tells us that, in 1813, a Mr. Ogden wagered 1000 guineas to one that "seven" would not be thrown with a pair of dice ten successive times. The wager was accepted (though it was egregiously unfair) and strange to say his opponent threw "seven" *nine times running*. At this point Mr. Ogden offered 470 guineas to be off the bet. But his opponent declined (though the price offered was far beyond the real value of his chance). He cast yet once more, and threw "nine," so that Mr. Ogden won his guinea.

Now here we have an instance of a most remarkable series of throws, the like of which has never been recorded before or since. Before those throws had been made, it might have been asserted that the throwing of nine successive "sevens" with a pair of dice, was a circumstance which chance could never bring about, for experience was as much against such an event as it would seem to be against the turning up of a certain number ten successive times at roulette. Yet experience now shows that the thing is possible; and if we are to limit the action of chance, we must assert that the throwing of "seven" *ten* times in succession is an event which will never happen. Yet such a conclusion obviously rests on as unstable a basis as the former, of which experience has disposed. Observe, however, how the two gamblers viewed this very eventuality. Nine successive "sevens" had been thrown; and if there were any truth in the theory that the power of chance was limited, it might have been regarded as all but certain that the next throw would not be a "seven." But a run of bad fortune had so shaken Mr. Ogden's faith in his luck (as well as in the theory of the maturity of the chances) that he was ready to pay 470 guineas (nearly thrice the mathematical value of his opponent's chance) in order to save his endangered thousand; and so confident was his opponent that the run of luck would continue that he declined this very favourable offer. Experience had in fact shown both the players, that although "sevens" could not be thrown for ever, yet there was no saying when the throw would change. Both reasoned probably that as an eighth throw had followed seven successive throws of "seven" (a wonderful chance), and as a ninth had followed eight successive throws (an unprecedented event), a tenth might well follow the nine (though hitherto no such series of throws had ever been heard of). They were forced as it were by the run of events to reason justly as to the possibility of a tenth throw of "seven,"—nay, to exaggerate that possibility into probability; and it appears from the narrative that the strange series of throws quite checked the betting propensities of the bystanders, and that not one was led to lay the wager (which according to ordinary gambling superstitions would have been a safe one) that the tenth throw would not give "seven."

We have spoken of the unfairness of the original wager. It may interest our readers to know exactly how much should have been wagered against a single guinea, that ten "sevens" would not be thrown. With a pair of dice there are thirty-six possible throws, and six of these give "seven" as the total. Thus the chance of throwing "seven" is one sixth, and the chance of throwing "seven" ten times running is obtained by multiplying six into itself ten times, and placing the resulting number under unity, to represent the minute fractional chance required. It will be found that the number thus obtained is 60,466,176, and instead of 1,000 guineas, fairness required that 60,466,175 guineas should have been wagered against one guinea, so enormous are the chances against the occurrence of ten successive throws of "seven." Even against nine successive throws the fair odds would have been 10,077,595 to one, or

about forty thousand guineas to a farthing. But when the nine throws of "seven" had been made, the chance of a tenth throw of "seven" was simply one-sixth as at the first trial. If there were any truth in the theory of the "maturity of the chances," the chance of such a throw would of course be greatly diminished. But even taking the mathematical value of the chance, Mr. Ogden need in fairness only have offered a sixth part of 1,001 guineas (the amount of the stakes), or 166 guineas 17s. 6d., to be off his wager. So that his opponent accepted in the first instance an utterly unfair offer, and refused in the second instance a sum exceeding by more than three hundred guineas the real value of his chance.

Closely connected with the theory about the range of possibility in the matter of chance combinations, is the theory of the maturity of the chances,—"the most elementary of the theories on probabilities." It might safely be termed the most mischievous of gambling superstitions.

As an illustration of the application of this theory, we may cite the case of an Englishman, once well known at foreign gambling-tables, who had based a system on a generalisation of this theory. In point of fact the theory asserts that when there has been a run in favour of any particular event, the chances in favour of the event are reduced, and, therefore, necessarily, the chances in favour of other events are increased. Now our Englishman watched the play at the roulette table for two full hours, carefully noting the numbers which came up during that time. Then, eschewing those numbers which had come up oftenest, he staked his money on those which had come up very seldom or not at all. Here was an infallible system according to "the most elementary of the theories of probability." The tendency of chance-results to right themselves, so that events equally likely in the first instance will occur an equal number of times in the long run, was called into action to enrich our gambler and to ruin the unlucky bankers. Be it noted, in passing, that events do thus right themselves, though this circumstance does not operate quite as the gambler supposed, and cannot be trusted to put a penny into any one's pocket. The system was tried, however, and instead of reasoning respecting its soundness, we may content ourselves with recording the result. On the first day our Englishman won more than seven hundred pounds in a single hour. "His exultation was boundless. He thought he had really discovered the 'philosopher's stone.' Off he went to his banker's, and transmitted the greater portion of his winnings to London. The next day he played and lost fifty pounds; and the following day he achieved the same result, and had to write to town for remittances. In fine, in a week he had lost all the money he won at first, with the exception of fifty pounds, which he reserved to take him home; and being thoroughly convinced of the exceeding fickleness of fortune, he has never staked a sixpence since, and does all in his power to dissuade others from playing."*

It may appear paradoxical to say, that there is chance that results right

* From an interesting paper entitled "*Le Jeu est fait*" in *Chambers's Journal*.

themselves—nay, that there is an absolute certainty that in the long run they will occur as often (in proportion) as their respective chances warrant, and at the same time to assert that it is utterly useless for any gambler to trust to this circumstance. Yet not only is each statement true, but it is of first-rate importance in the study of our subject that the truth of each should be clearly recognized.

That the first statement is true, will perhaps not be questioned. The reasoning on which it is based would be too abstruse for these pages; but it has been experimentally verified over and over again. Thus, if a coin be tossed many thousands of times, and the numbers of resulting "heads" and "tails" be noted, it is found, not necessarily that these numbers differ from each other by a very small quantity, but that their difference is small compared with either. In mathematical phrase, the two numbers are nearly in a ratio of equality. Again, if a die be tossed, say, six million times, then, although there will not probably have been exactly a million throws of each face, yet the number of throws of each face will differ from a million by a quantity very small indeed compared with the total number of throws. So certain is this law, that, it has been made the means of determining the real chances for an event, or of ascertaining facts which had been before unknown. Thus, De Morgan relates the following story in illustration of this law. He received it "from a distinguished naval officer, who was once employed to bring home a cargo of dollars." "At the end of the voyage," he says, "it was discovered that one of the boxes which contained them had been forced; and on making further search a large bag of dollars was discovered in the possession of some one on board. The coins in the different boxes were a mixture of all manner of dates and sovereigns; and it occurred to the commander, that if the contents of the boxes were sorted, a comparison of the proportions of the different sorts in the bag, with those in the box which had been opened, would afford strong presumptive evidence one way or the other. This comparison was accordingly made, and the agreement between the distribution of the several coins in the bag and those in the box, was such as to leave no doubt as to the former having formed a part of the latter." If the bag of stolen dollars had been a small one, the inference would have been unsafe, but the great number of the dollars corresponded to a great number of chance trials; and as in such a large series of trials the several results would be sure to occur in numbers corresponding to their individual chances, it followed that the numbers of coins of the different kinds in the stolen lot would be proportional, or very nearly so, to the numbers of those respective coins in the forced box. Thus in this case the thief increased the strength of the evidence against him by every dollar he added to his ill-gotten store.

We may mention, in passing, an even more curious application of this law, to no less a question than that much talked of, but little understood problem, the squaring of the circle. It can be shown by mathematical reasoning, that, if a straight rod be so tossed at random into the air as to

fall on a grating of equidistant parallel bars, the chance of the rod falling through depends on the length and thickness of the rod, the distance between the parallel bars, and the proportion in which the circumference of a circle exceeds the diameter. So that when the rod and grating have been carefully measured, it is only necessary to know the proportion just mentioned in order to calculate the chance of the rod falling through. But also, if we can learn in some other way the chance of the rod falling through, we can infer the proportion referred to. Now the law we are considering teaches us that if we only toss the rod often enough, the chance of its falling through will be indicated by the number of times it actually does fall through, compared with the total number of trials. Hence we can estimate the proportion in which the circumference of a circle exceeds the diameter, by merely tossing a rod over a grating several thousand times, and counting how often it falls through. The experiment has been tried, and Professor De Morgan tells us that a very excellent evaluation of the celebrated proportion (the determination of which is equivalent in reality to squaring the circle) was the result.

And let it be noticed in passing that this inexorable law—for in its effects it is the most inflexible of all the laws of probability—shows how fatal it must be to contend long at any game of pure chance, where the odds are in favour of our opponent. For instance, let us assume for a moment that the assertion of the foreign gaming bankers is true, and that the chances are but from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in their favour. Yet in the long run, this percentage must manifest its effects. Where a few hundreds have been wagered the bank may not win $1\frac{1}{2}$ or $2\frac{1}{2}$ on each, or may lose considerably; but where thousands of hundreds are wagered, the bank will certainly win about their percentage, and the players will therefore lose to a corresponding extent. This is inevitable, so only that the play continue long enough. Now it is sometimes forgotten that to ensure such gain to the bank, it is by no means necessary that the players should come prepared to stake so many hundreds of pounds. Those who sit down to play may not have a tithe of the sum necessary—if only wagered once—to ensure the success of the bank. But every florin the players bring with them may be, and commonly is, wagered over and over again. There is repeated gain and loss, and loss and gain; insomuch that the player who finally loses a hundred pounds, may have wagered in the course of the sitting a thousand or even many thousand pounds. Those fortunate beings who “break the bank” from time to time, may even have accomplished the feat of wagering millions during the process which ends in the final loss of the few thousands they may have begun with.

Why is it, then, it will be asked, that this inexorable law is yet not to be trusted? For this reason, simply, that the mode of its operation is altogether uncertain. If in a thousand trials there has been a remarkable preponderance of any particular class of events, it is not a whit more probable that the preponderance will be compensated by a corresponding deficiency in the next thousand trials than that it will be repeated in that

set also. The most probable result of the second thousand trials is precisely that result which was most probable for the first thousand—that is, that there will be no marked preponderance either way. But there *may be* such a preponderance; and it may lie either way. It is the same with the next thousand, and the next, and for every such set. They are in no way affected by preceding events. In the nature of things, how can they be? But “the whirligig of time brings in its revenges” in its own way. The balance is restored just as chance directs. It may be in the next thousand trials, it may be not before many thousands of trials. We are utterly unable to guess when or how it will be brought about.

But it may be urged that this is mere assertion; and many will be very ready to believe that it is opposed to experience, or even contrary to common sense. Yet experience has over and over again confirmed the matter, and common sense, though it may not avail to unravel the seeming paradox, yet cannot insist on the absurdity that coming events of pure chance are affected by completed events of the same kind. If a person has tossed “heads” nine times running (we assume fair and lofty tosses with a well-balanced coin), common sense teaches him, as he is about to make the tenth trial, that the chances on that trial are precisely the same as the chances on the first. It would indeed have been rash for him to predict that he would reach that trial without once failing to toss “head;” but as the thing has happened, the odds originally against it count for nothing. They are disposed of by known facts. We have said, however, that experience confirms our theory. It chanced that a series of experiments have been made on coin-tossing. Buffon was the experimenter, and he tossed thousands of times, noting always how many times he tossed “head” running before “tail” appeared. In the course of these trials he many times tossed “head” nine times running. Now, if the tossing “head” nine times running rendered the chance of tossing a tenth head much less than usual, it would necessarily follow that in considerably more than one half of these instances Buffon would have failed to toss a tenth head. But he did not. We forget the exact numbers, but this we know, that in about half of the cases in which he tossed nine “heads” running, the next trial also gave him “head;” and about half of these tossings of ten successive “heads” were followed by the tossing of an eleventh “head.” In the nature of things this was to be expected.

And now let us consider the cognate questions suggested by our sharper’s ideas respecting the person who plays. This person is to consider carefully whether he is “*in vein*,” and not otherwise to play. He is to be cool and businesslike, for fortune is invariably adverse to an angry player. Steinmetz, who appears to place some degree of reliance on the suggestion that a player should be “*in vein*,” cites in illustration and confirmation of the rule the following instance from his own experience:—“I remember,” he says, “a curious incident in my childhood which seems very much to the point of this axiom. A magnificent gold watch and chain were given towards the building of a church, and my mother took three

chances, which were at a very high figure, the watch and chain being valued at more than 100*l*. One of these chances was entered in my name, one in my brother's, and the third in my mother's. I had to throw for her as well as myself. My brother threw an insignificant figure; for myself I did the same; but, oddly enough, I refused to throw for my mother on finding that I had lost my chance, saying that I should wait a little longer—rather a curious piece of prudence" (read, rather, superstition) "for a child of thirteen. The raffle was with three dice; the majority of the chances had been thrown, and 'thirty-four' was the highest." (It is to be presumed that the three dice were thrown twice, yet "thirty-four" is a remarkable throw with six dice, and "thirty-six" altogether exceptional.) "I went on throwing the dice for amusement, and was surprised to find that every throw was better than the one I had in the raffle. I thereupon said, 'Now I'll throw for mamma.' I threw thirty-six, which won the watch! My mother had been a large subscriber to the building of the church, and the priest said that my winning the watch for her was quite *providential*. According to M. Houdin's authority, however, it seems that I only got into 'vein,'—but how I came to pause and defer throwing the last chance has always puzzled me respecting this incident of my childhood, which made too great an impression ever to be effaced."

It is probable that most of our readers can recall some circumstance in their lives, some surprising coincidence, which has caused a similar impression, and which they have found it almost impossible to regard as strictly fortuitous.

In chance games especially, curious coincidences of the sort occur, and lead to the superstitious notion that they are not mere coincidences, but in some definite way associated with the fate or fortune of the player, or else with some event which has previously taken place,—as a change of seats, a new deal, or the like. There is scarcely a gambler who is not prepared to assert his faith in certain observances whereby, as he believes, a change of luck may be brought about. In an old work on card-games the player is gravely advised, if the luck has been against him, to turn three times round with his chair, "for then the luck will infallibly change in your favour."

Equally superstitious is the notion that anger brings bad luck, or, as M. Houdin's authority puts it, that "the demon of bad luck invariably pursues a passionate player." At a game of pure chance good temper makes the player careless under ill-fortune, but it cannot secure him against it. In like manner, passion may excite the attention of others to the player's losses, and in any case causes himself to suffer more keenly under them, but it is only in this sense that passion is unlucky for him. He is as likely to make a lucky hit when in a rage as in the calmest mood.

It is easy to see how superstitions such as these take their origin. We can understand that since one who has been very unlucky in games of pure chance, is not antecedently likely to continue equally unlucky, a superstitious observance is not unlikely to be followed by a seeming change of

luck. When this happens the coincidence is noted and remembered ; but failures are readily forgotten. Again, if the fortunes of a passionate player be recorded by dispassionate bystanders, he will not appear to be pursued by worse luck than his neighbours ; but he will be disposed to regard himself as the victim of unusual ill-fortune. He may perhaps register a vow to keep his temper in future ; and then his luck may seem to him to improve, even though a careful record of his gains and losses would show no change whatever in his fortunes.

But it may not seem quite so easy to explain those undoubted runs of luck, by which players "in the vein," (as supposed) have broken gaming-banks, and have enabled those who have followed their fortunes to achieve temporary success. The history of the notorious Garcia, and of others who like him have been for awhile the favourites of fortune, will occur at once to many of our readers, and will appear to afford convincing proof of the theory that the luck of such gamblers has had a real influence on the fortunes of the game. The following narrative gives an accurate and graphic picture of the way in which these "bank-breakers" are followed and believed in, while their success seems to last.

The scene is laid in one of the most celebrated German Kursaals.

"What a sudden influx of people into the room ! Now, indeed, we shall see a celebrity. The tall light-haired young man coming towards us, and attended by such a retinue, is a young Saxon nobleman who made his appearance here a short time ago, and commenced his gambling career by staking very small sums ; but, by the most extraordinary luck, he was able to increase his capital to such an extent that he now rarely stakes under the maximum, and almost always wins. They say that when the croupiers see him place his money on the table, they immediately prepare to pay him, without waiting to see which colour has actually won, and that they have offered him a handsome sum down to desist from playing while he remains here. Crowds of people stand outside the Kursaal doors every morning, awaiting his arrival, and when he comes following him into the room, and staking as he stakes. When he ceases playing they accompany him to the door, and shower on him congratulations and thanks for the good fortune he has brought them. See how all the people make way for him at the table, and how deferential are the subdued greetings of his acquaintances ! He does not bring much money with him, his luck is too great to require it. He takes some notes out of a case, and places maximums on *black* and *couleur*. A crowd of eager hands are immediately outstretched from all parts of the table, heaping up silver and gold and notes on the spaces on which he has staked his money, till there scarcely seems room for another coin, while the other spaces on the table only contain a few florins staked by sceptics who refuse to believe in the count's luck." He wins ; and the narrative proceeds to describe his continued successes, until he rises from the table a winner of about one hundred thousand francs at that sitting.

The success of Garcia was so remarkable at times as to affect the

value of the shares in the *Privilegirte Bank* ten or twenty per cent. Nor would it be difficult to cite many instances which seem to supply incontrovertible evidence that there is something more than common chance in the temporary successes of these (so-called) fortunate men.

Indeed, to assert merely that in the nature of things there can be no such thing as luck that can be depended on even for a short time, would probably be quite useless. There is only one way of meeting the infatuation of those who trust in the fates of lucky gamblers. We can show that, granted a sufficient number of trials,—and it will be remembered that the number of those who have risked their fortunes at *roulette* and *rouge et noir* is incalculably great—there must *inevitably* be a certain number who appear exceptionally lucky—or, rather, that the odds are overwhelmingly against the continuance of play on the scale which prevails at the foreign gambling tables, without the occurrence of several instances of persistent runs of luck.

To remove from the question the perplexities resulting from the nature of the abovenamed games, let us suppose that the tossing of a coin is to determine the success or failure of the player, and that he will win if he throws "head." Now if a player tossed "head" twenty times running on any occasion it would be regarded as a most remarkable run of luck, and it would not be easy to persuade those who witnessed the occurrence that the thrower was not in some special and definite manner the favourite of fortune. We may take such exceptional success as corresponding to the good fortune of a "bank-breaker." Yet it is easily shown that with a number of trials which must fall enormously short of the number of cases in which fortune is risked at foreign *Kurssaal*s, the throwing of twenty successive heads would be practically *ensured*. Suppose every adult person in Britain—say 10,000,000 persons in all—were to toss a coin, each tossing until "tail" was thrown; then it is practically certain that several among them would toss twenty times before "tail" was thrown. Thus, it is certain that about five millions would toss "head" once; of these about one half, or some two millions and a half, would toss "head" on the second trial; about a million and a quarter would toss head on the third trial; about six hundred thousand on the fourth; some three hundred thousand on the fifth; and by proceeding in this way—roughly halving the numbers successively obtained—we find that some eight or nine of the ten million persons would be almost certain to toss "head" twenty times running. It must be remembered that so long as the numbers continue large the probability that *about* half will toss "head" at the next trial amounts almost to certainty. For example, about 140 toss "head" sixteen times running: now it is utterly unlikely that of these 140, fewer than 60 will toss "head" yet a seventeenth time. But if the above process failed on trial to give even one person who tossed heads twenty times running—an utterly improbable event—yet the trial could be made four or five times, with practical certainty that not one or two, but thirty or forty, persons would achieve the seemingly incredible feat of tossing

"head" twenty times running. Nor would all these thirty or forty persons fail to throw even three or four more "heads."

Now if we consider the immense number of trials made at gambling tables, and if we further consider the gamblers as in a sense typified by our ten millions of coin-tossers, we shall see that it is not merely probable but absolutely certain that from time to time there must be marvellous runs of luck at *roulette, rouge et noir, hazard, faro*, and other games of chance. Suppose that at the public gaming-tables on the continent there sit down each night but one thousand persons in all, that each person makes but ten ventures each night, and that there are but one hundred gambling nights in the year—each supposition falling far below the truth—there are then one million ventures each year. It cannot be regarded as wonderful, then, that among the fifty millions of ventures made (on this supposition) during the last half century, there should be noted some runs of luck which on any single trial would seem incredible. On the contrary, this is so far from being wonderful that it would be far more wonderful if no such runs of luck had occurred. It is probable that if the actual number of ventures, and the circumstances of each, could be ascertained, and if any mathematician could deal with the tremendous array of figures in such sort as to deduce the exact mathematical chance of the occurrence of bank-breaking runs of luck, it would be found that the antecedent odds were many millions to one in favour of the occurrence of a certain number of such events. In the simpler case of our coin-tossers the chance of twenty successive "heads" being tossed can be quite readily calculated. We have made the calculation, and we find that if the ten million persons had each two trials the odds would be more than 10,000 to 1 in favour of the occurrence of twenty successive "heads" once at least; and only a million and a half need have a single trial each, in order to give an even chance of such an occurrence.

But we may learn a further lesson from our illustrative tossers. We have seen that granted only a sufficient number of trials, runs of luck are practically certain to occur; but we may also infer that no run of luck can be trusted to continue. The very principle which has led us to the conclusion that several of our tossers would throw twenty "heads" successively, leads also to the conclusion that one who has tossed heads twelve or thirteen times, or any other considerable number of times in succession, is not more (or less) likely to toss "head" on the next trial than at the beginning. *About half*, we said, in discussing the fortunes of the tossers, would toss "head" at the next trial: in other words, *about half* would fail to toss "head." The chances for and against these lucky tossers are equal at the next trial, precisely as the chances for and against the least lucky of the ten million tossers would be equal at any single tossing.

Yet, it may be urged, experience shows that luck continues; for many have won by following the lead of lucky players. Now we might at the outset, point out that this belief in the continuance of luck is suggested by an idea directly contradictory to that on which is based the theory of the

maturity of the chances. If the oftener an event has occurred, the more unlikely is its occurrence at the next trial—the common belief—then contrary to the common belief, the oftener a player has won, (that is, the longer has been his run of luck), the more unlikely is he to win at the next venture. We cannot separate the two theories, and assume that the theory of the maturity of the chances relates to the play, and the theory of runs of luck to the player. The success of the player at any trial is as distinctly an event—a chance event—as the turning up of ace or deuce at the cast of a die.

What then are we to say of the experience of those who have won money by following a lucky player? Let us revert to our coin-tossers. Let us suppose that the progress of the venture in a given county is made known to a set of betting men in that county; and that when it becomes known that a person has tossed "head" twelve times running, the betting men hasten to back the luck of that person. Further, suppose this to happen in every county in England. Now we have seen that these persons are no more likely to toss a thirteenth "head," than they are to fail. About half will succeed and about half will fail. Thus about half their backers will win and about half will lose. But the successes of the winners will be widely announced; while the mischances of the losers will be concealed. This will happen—the like notoriously does happen—for two reasons. First, gamblers pay little attention to the misfortunes of their fellows: the professed gambler is utterly selfish, and, moreover, he hates the sight of misfortune because it unpleasantly reminds him of his own risks. Secondly, losing gamblers do not like their losses to be noised abroad; they object to having their luck suspected by others, and they are even disposed to blind themselves to their own ill-fortune as far as possible. Thus, the inevitable success of about one half of our coin-tossers would be accompanied inevitably by the success of those who "backed their luck, and the success of such backers would be bruited abroad and be quoted as examples; while the failure of those who had backed the other half, (whose luck was about to fail them), would be comparatively unnoticed. Unquestionably the like holds in the case of public gambling-tables. If any doubt this, let them inquire what has been heard of those who continued to back Garcia and other "bank-breakers." We know that Garcia and the rest of these lucky gamblers have been ruined; they had risen too high and were followed too constantly for their fall to remain unnoticed. But what has been heard of those unfortunates who backed Garcia after his last successful venture, and before the change in his luck had been made manifest? We hear nothing of them, though a thousand stories are told of those who made money while Garcia and the rest were "in luck."

In passing, we may add to these considerations the circumstance that it is the interest of gaming-bankers to conceal the misfortunes of the unlucky, and to announce and exaggerate the success of the fortunate.

We by no means question, be it understood, the possibility that money

may be gained quite safely by gambling. Granting, first, odds such as the "banks" have in their favour; secondly, a sufficient capital to prevent premature collapse; and thirdly, a sufficient number of customers, success is absolutely certain in the long run. The capital of the gambling-public, doubtless exceeds collectively the capital of the gambling-banks; but it is not used collectively; the fortunes of the gambling-public are devoured successively, the sticks which would be irresistible as a faggot, are broken one by one. We leave our readers to judge whether this circumstance should encourage gambling or the reverse.

It is also easy to understand why in the betting on horse-racing in this country and others, success ordinarily attends the professional bettor, rather than the amateur, or, in the slang of the subject, why "the ring" gets the advantage of "the gentlemen?" Apart from his access to secret sources of information, the professional bettor nearly always "lays the odds" that is, bets against individual horses; while the amateur "takes the odds," or backs the horse he fancies. Now if the odds represented the strict value of the horse's chance, it would be as safe in the long run to "take" as to "lay" the odds. But no professional bettor lays fair odds, save by mistake. Nor is it difficult to get the amateur to take unfair odds. For "backing" is seemingly a safe course. The "backer" risks a small sum to gain a large one, and if the fair large sum is a little reduced, he still conceives that he is not risking much. Yet, (to take an example), if the true odds are nine to one against a horse, and the amateur sportsman consents to take eight to one in hundreds, then though he risks but a single hundred against the chance of winning eight, he has been as truly swindled out of ten pounds as though his pocket had been picked of that sum. This is easily shown. The total sum staked is nine hundred pounds, and at the odds of nine to one, the stakes should have been respectively ninety pounds and eight hundred and ten pounds. Our amateur should, therefore, only have risked ninety pounds for his fair chance of the total sum stated. But he has been persuaded to risk one hundred pounds for that chance. He has therefore been swindled out of ten pounds. And in the long run, if he laid several hundreds of wagers of the same amount, and on the same plan, he would inevitably lose on the average about ten pounds per venture.

In conclusion, we may thus present the position of the gambler who is not ready to secure fortune as his ally by trickery. If he meets gamblers who are not equally honest, he is not trying his luck against theirs, but, at the best (as De Morgan puts it) only a part of his against more than the whole of theirs. If he meets players as honest as himself he must, nevertheless, as Lord Holland said to Selwyn, "be—in earnest and without irony—*en vérité le serviteur très humble des événements*, in truth the very humble servant of events."

Hours in a Library.

NO V.—HORACE WALPOLE.

THE history of England, throughout a very large segment of the eighteenth century, is simply a synonym for the works of Horace Walpole. There are, indeed, some other books upon the subject. Some good stories are scattered up and down the *Annual Register*, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and Nichols' *Anecdotes*. There is a speech or two of Burke's not without merit, and a readable letter may be disinterred every now and then from beneath the piles of contemporary correspondence. When the history of the times comes to be finally written in the fashion now prevalent, in which some six portly octavos are allotted to a year, and an event takes longer to describe than to occur, the industrious will find ample mines of waste paper in which they may quarry to their heart's content. Though Hansard was not, and newspapers were in their infancy, the shelves of the British Museum and other repositories groan beneath mountains of State papers, law reports, pamphlets, and chaotic raw materials, from which some precious ore may be smelted down. But these amorphous masses are attractive chiefly to the philosophers who are too profound to care for individual character, or to those praiseworthy students who would think the labour of a year well rewarded by the discovery of a single fact tending to throw a shade of additional perplexity upon the secret of Junius. Walpole's writings belong to the good old-fashioned type of history, which aspires to be nothing more than the quintessence of contemporary gossip. If the opinion be pardonable in these days, history of that kind has not only its charm, but its serious value. If not very profound or comprehensive, it impresses upon us the fact—so often forgotten—that our grandfathers were human beings. The ordinary historian reduces them to mere mechanical mummies; in Walpole's pages they are still living flesh and blood. Turn over any of the proper decorous history books, mark every passage where, for a moment, we seem to be transported to the past—to the thunders of Chatham, the drivellings of Newcastle, or the prosings of George Grenville, as they sounded in contemporary ears—and it will be safe to say that, on counting them up, a good half will turn out to be reflections from the illuminating flashes of Walpole. Excise all that comes from him, and the history sinks towards the level of the solid Archdeacon Coxe; add his keen touches, and, as in the *Castle of Otranto*, the portraits of our respectable old ancestors, which have been hanging in gloomy repose upon the wall, suddenly step from their frames and, for some brief space, assume a spectral vitality.

It is only according to rule that a writer who has been so useful should have been a good deal abused. No one is so amusing and so generally unpopular as a clever retailer of gossip. Yet it does seem rather hard that Walpole should have received such hard measure from Macaulay, through whose pages so much of his light has been transfused. The explanation, perhaps, is easy. Macaulay dearly loved the paradox that a man wrote admirably precisely because he was a fool, and applied it to the two greatest portrait painters of the times—Walpole and Boswell. There is something which hurts our best feelings in the success of a man whom we heartily despise. It seems to imply, which is intolerable, that our penetration has been at fault, or that merit—that is to say, our own conspicuous quality—is liable to be outstripped in this world by imposture. It is consoling if we can wrap ourselves in the belief that good work can be extracted from bad brains, and that shallowness, affectation, and levity can, by some strange chemistry, be transmuted into a substitute for genius. Do we not all, if we have reached middle age, remember some idiot (of course he was an idiot!) at school or college who had somehow managed to slip past us in the race of life, and revenge ourselves by swearing that he is an idiot still, and that idiocy is a qualification for good fortune? Swift somewhere says that a paper-cutter does its work all the better when it is blunt, and, converts the fact into an allegory of human affairs, showing that decorous dullness is an over-match for genius. Macaulay was incapable, both in a good and bad sense, of Swift's trenchant misanthropy. His dislike to Walpole was founded not so much upon posthumous jealousy—though that passion is not so rare as absurd—but on the singular contrast between the character and intellect of the two men. The typical Englishman, with his rough, strong sense, passing at times into the narrowest insular prejudice, detested the Frenchified fine gentleman who minced his mother tongue and piqued himself on cosmopolitan indifference to patriotic sentiments: the ambitious historian was irritated by the contempt which the dilettante dabbler in literature affected for their common art; and the thorough-going Whig was scandalized by the man who, whilst claiming that sacred name, and living face to face with Chatham and Burke and the great Revolution families in all their glory, ventured to intimate his opinion that they, like other idols, had a fair share of clay and rubbish in their composition, and who, after professing a kind of sham republicanism, was frightened by the French Revolution into a paroxysm of ultra-Toryism. "You wretched fribble!" exclaims Macaulay; "you shallow scorner of all that is noble! You are nothing but a heap of silly whims and conceited airs! Strip off one mask of affectation from your mind, and we are still as far as ever from the real man. The very highest faculty that can be conceded to you is a keen eye for oddities, whether old curiosity shops or in Parliament; and to that you owe whatever just reputation you have acquired." Macaulay's fervour of rebuke is amusing, though, by a righteous Nemesis, it includes a specimen of blindness as gross as any that he attributes to Walpole. The summary decision that the chief use of France is to interpret

England to Europe, is a typical example of that insular arrogance for which Mr. Arnold has popularized the name of Philistinism.

Yet criticism of this one-sided kind has its value. At least it suggests a problem. What is the element left out of account? Folly is never the real secret of a literary reputation, or what noble harvests of genius we should produce! If we patiently take off all the masks we must come at last to the animating principle beneath. Even the great clothes philosophers did not hold that a mere Chinese puzzle of mask within mask could enclose sheer vacancy; there must be some kernel within, which may be discovered by sufficient patience. And in the first place, it may be asked, why did poor Walpole wear a mask at all? The answer seems to be obvious. The men of that age may be divided by a line which, to the philosophic eye, is of far more importance than that which separated Jacobites from loyal Whigs or Dissenters from High Churchmen. It separated the men who could drink two bottles of port after dinner from the men who could not. To men of delicate digestions the test imposed by the jovial party in ascendancy must have been severer than those due to political or ecclesiastical bigotry. They had to choose between social disabilities on the one side, and on the other indigestion for themselves and gout for their descendants. Thackeray, in a truly pathetic passage, partly draws the veil from their sufferings. Almost all the wits of Queen Anne's reign, he observes, were fat: "Swift was fat; Addison was fat; Gay and Thomson were preposterously fat; all that fuddling and punch drinking, that club and coffee-house boozing, shortened the lives and enlarged the waistcoats of men of that age." Think of the dinner described in Swift's *Polite Conversation*, and compare the following bill of fare for a party of seven with the *menu* of a modern London dinner. First course: a sirloin of beef, fish, a shoulder of veal and a tongue; second course, almond pudding, patties, and soup; third course, a venison pasty, a hare, a rabbit, some pigeons, a goose, and a ham. All which is washed down by wine and beer, until, at length, a large tankard of October having been passed round, the gentlemen sit down to drink. Think of this and imagine supper in the perspective; imagine a man of irritable nerves and without the stomach of an ostrich, set down to such a meal, and regarded as a milkop if he flinches. The very report of such conviviality—before which Christopher North's performances in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* sink into insignificance—is enough to produce nightmares in the men of our degenerate times, and may help us to understand the peevishness of feeble invalids such as Pope and Lord Harvey in the elder generation, or Walpole in that which was rising. Amongst these Garagantuan consumers, who combined in one the attributes of "gorging Jack and guzzling Jemmy," Sir Robert Walpole was celebrated for his powers, and seems to have owed to them no small share of his popularity. Horace writes piteously from the paternal mansion, to which he had returned in 1748, not long after his tour in Italy, to one of his artistic friends: "Only imagine," he exclaims, "that I here every day see men who are mountains of roast beef, and only seem just roughly hewn out into outlines of

human form, like the giant rock at Pratolino ! I shudder when I see them brandish their knives in act to carve, and look on them as savages that devour one another. I should not stare at all more than I do if yonder alderman at the lower end of the table were to stick his fork into his neighbour's jolly cheek, and cut a brave slice of brown and fat. Why, I'll swear I see no difference between a country gentleman and a sirloin ; whenever the first laughs or the second is cut, there run out just the same streams of gravy ! Indeed, the sirloin does not ask quite so many questions." What was the style of conversation at these tremendous entertainments had better be left to the imagination. Sir R. Walpole's theory on that subject is upon record ; and we can dimly guess at the feelings of a delicate young gentleman who had just learnt to talk about Domenichinos and Guidos, and to buy ancient bronzes, when plunged into the coarse society of these mountains of roast beef. As he grew up manners became a trifle more refined, and the customs described so faithfully by Fielding and Smollett belonged to a lower social stratum. Yet we can fancy Walpole's occasional visit to his constituents, and imagine him forced to preside at one of those election feasts which still survive on Hogarth's canvas. Substitute him for the luckless fine gentleman in a laced coat, who represents the successful candidate in the first picture of the series. A drunken voter is dropping lighted pipe ashes upon his wig ; a hideous old hag is picking his pockets ; a boy is brewing oceans of punch in a mash-tub ; a man is blowing bagpipes in his ear ; a fat parson close by is gorging the remains of a haunch of venison ; a butcher is pouring gin on his neighbour's broken head ; an alderman—a very mountain of roast beef—is sinking back in a fit, whilst a barber is trying to bleed him ; brickbats are flying in at the windows ; the room reeks with the stale smell of heavy viands and the fresh vapours of punch and gin, whilst the very air is laden with discordant howls and thick with oaths and ribald songs. Only think of the smart young candidate's headache next morning in the days when soda-water was not invented ! And remember too that the representatives were not entirely free from sympathy with the coarseness of their constituents. Just at the period of Hogarth's painting, Walpole, when speaking of the feeling excited by a Westminster election, has occasion to use this pleasing "new fashionable proverb"—"We spit in his hat on Thursday, and wiped it off on Friday." It owed its origin to a feat performed by Lord Cobham at an assembly given at his own house. For a bet of a guinea he came behind Lord Hervey, who was talking to some ladies, and made use of his hat as a spittoon. The point of the joke was that Lord Hervey—son of Pope's "mere white curd of asses' milk," and related, as the scandal went, rather too closely to Horace Walpole himself—was a person of effeminate appearance, and therefore considered unlikely—wrongly, as it turned out—to resent the insult. We may charitably hope that the assailants, who thus practically exemplified the proper mode of treating milksops, were drunk. The two-bottle men who lingered till our day were surviving relics of the type which then gave the tone to society. Within a few years

there was a prime minister who always consoled himself under defeats and celebrated triumphs with his bottle; a chancellor who abolished evening sittings on the ground that he was always drunk in the evening; and even an archbishop—an Irish archbishop, it is true—whose jovial habits broke down his constitution. Scratch those jovial toping aristocrats and you everywhere find the Squire Western. A man of squeamish tastes and excessive sensibility jostled amongst that thick-skinned, iron-nerved generation, was in a position with which any one may sympathise who knows the sufferings of a delicate lad at a public school in the old (and not so very old) brutal days. The victim of that tyranny slunk away from the rough horseplay of his companions to muse, like Dobbin, over the *Arabian Nights* in a corner, or find some amusement which his tormentors held to be only fit for girls. So Horace Walpole retired to Strawberry Hill and made toys of Gothic architecture, or heraldry, or dilettante antiquarianism. The great discovery had not then been made, we must remember, that excellence in field-sports deserved to be placed on a level with the Christian virtues. The fine gentlemen of the Chesterfield era speak of fox-hunting pretty much as we speak of prize-fighting and bull-baiting. When all manly exercises had an inseparable taint of coarseness, delicate people naturally mistook effeminacy for refinement. When you can only join in male society on pain of drinking yourself under the table, the safest plan is to retire to tea-tables and small talk. For many years, Walpole's greatest pleasure seems to have been drinking tea with Lady Suffolk, and carefully piecing together bits of scandal about the courts of the first two Georges. He tells us, with all the triumph of a philosopher describing a brilliant scientific induction, how he was sometimes able, by adding his bits of gossip to hers, to unravel the secret of some wretched intrigue which had puzzled two generations of quidnuncs. The social triumphs on which he most piqued himself were of a congenial order. He sits down to write elaborate letters to Sir Horace Mann, at Florence, brimming over with irrepressible triumph when he has persuaded some titled ladies to visit his pet toy, the printing-press, at Strawberry Hill, and there, of course to their unspeakable surprise, his printer draws off a copy of verses composed in their honour in the most faded style of old-fashioned gallantry. He is intoxicated by his appointment to act as poet-laureate on the occasion of a visit of the Princess Amelia to Stowe. She is solemnly conducted to a temple of the Muses and Apollo, and there finds one of his admirable effusions,—

T'other day with a beautiful frown on her brow,
To the rest of the gods said the Venus of Stowe :

and so on. "She was really in Elysium," he declares, and visited the arch erected in her honour three or four times a day.

It is not wonderful, we must confess, that burly ministers and jovial squires laughed horse-laughs at this mincing dandy, and tried in their clumsy fashion to avenge themselves for the sarcasms which, as they instinctively felt, lay hid beneath this mask of affectation. The enmity between the lapdog and the mastiff is an old story. Nor, as we must con-

fess again, were these tastes redeemed by very amiable qualities beneath the smooth external surface. There was plenty of feminine spite as well as feminine delicacy. To the marked fear of ridicule natural to a sensitive man, Walpole joined a very happy knack of quarrelling. He could protrude a feline set of claws from his velvet glove. He was a touchy companion and an intolerable superior. He set out by quarrelling with Gray, who, as it seems, could not stand his dandified airs of social impertinence, though it must be added in fairness that the bond which unites fellow travellers is, perhaps, the most trying known to humanity. He quarrelled with Mason after twelve years of intimate correspondence; he quarrelled with Montagu after a friendship of some forty years; he always thought that his dependants, such as Bentley, were angels for six months, and made their lives a burden to them afterwards; he had a long and complex series of quarrels with all his near relations. Sir Horace Mann escaped any quarrel during forty-five years of correspondence; but Sir Horace never left Florence and Walpole never reached it. Conway alone remained intimate and immaculate to the end, though there is a bitter remark or two in the Memoirs against the perfect Conway. With ladies, indeed, Walpole succeeded better; and perhaps we may accept, with due allowance for the artist's point of view, his own portrait of himself. He pronounces himself to be a "boundless friend, a bitter but placable enemy." Making the necessary corrections, we should translate this into "a bitter enemy, a warm but irritable friend." Tread on his toes, and he would let you feel his claws, though you were his oldest friend; but so long as you avoided his numerous tender points, he showed a genuine capacity for kindness and even affection; and in his later years he mellowed down into an amiable, purring old gentleman, responding with eager gratitude to the caresses of the charming Miss Berrys. Such a man, skinless and bilious, was ill qualified to join in the rough game of politics. He kept out of the arena while the hardest blows were given and taken, and confined his activity to lobbies and backstairs, where scandal was to be gathered and the hidden wires of intrigue to be delicately manipulated. He chuckles irrepressibly when he has confided a secret to a friend, who has let it out to a minister, who communicates it to a great personage, who explodes into inextinguishable wrath, and blows a whole elaborate plot into a thousand fragments. *To expect deep and settled political principle from such a man would be to look for grapes from thorns and figs from thistles; but to do Walpole justice, we must add that it would be equally absurd to exact settled principle from any politician of that age. We are beginning to regard our ancestors with a strange mixture of contempt and envy. We despise them because they cared nothing for the thoughts which for the last century have been upheaving society into strange convulsions; we envy them because they enjoyed the delicious calm which was the product of that indifference. Wearied by the incessant tossing and boiling of the torrent which carries us away, we look back with fond regret to the little backwater so far above Niagara, where scarcely a ripple marks the approaching rapids. There is a charm in the

great solid old eighteenth century mansions, which London is so rapidly engulfing, and even about the old red brick churches with "sleep-compelling" pews. We take imaginary naps amongst our grandfathers with no railways, no telegraphs, no mobs in Trafalgar Square, no discussions about ritualism or Dr. Colenso, and no reports of parliamentary debates. It is to our fancies an "island valley of Avition," or, less magniloquently, a pleasant land of Cockaine, where we may sleep away the disturbance of battle, and even read through *Clarissa Harlow*. We could put up with an occasional highwayman in Hyde Park, and perhaps do not think that our comfort would be seriously disturbed by a dozen executions in a morning at Tyburn. In such visionary glances through the centuries we have always the advantage of selecting our own position in life, and perhaps there are few that for such purposes we should prefer to Walpole's. We should lap ourselves against eating cares in the warm folds of a sinecure of 6,000*l.* a-year bestowed because our father was a prime minister. There are many immaculate persons at the present day to whom truth would be truth even when seen through such a medium. There are—we have their own authority for believing it—men who would be republicans, though their niece was married to a royal duke. Walpole, we must admit, was not of the number. He was an aristocrat to the backbone. He was a gossip by nature and education, and had lived from infancy in the sacred atmosphere of court intrigue; every friend he possessed in his own rank either had a place, or had lost a place, or was in want of a place, and generally combined all three characters; indifference to place was only a cunning mode of angling for a place, and politics was a series of ingeniously contrived manœuvres in which the moving power of the machinery was the desire of sharing the spoils. Walpole's talk about Magna Charta and the execution of Charles I. could, it is plain, imply but a skin-deep republicanism. He could not be seriously displeased with a state of things of which his own position was the natural outgrowth. His republicanism was about as genuine as his boasted indifference to money—a virtue which is not rare in bachelors who have more than they can spend. So long as he could buy as much bricabrac, as many knicknacks, and odd books and bronzes and curious portraits and odd gloves of celebrated characters, as he pleased; add a new tower and a set of battlements to Strawberry Hill every few years; keep a comfortable house in London, and have a sufficiency of carriages and horses; treat himself to an occasional tour, and keep his press steadily at work; he was not the man to complain of poverty. He was a republican, too, as long as that word implied that he and his father and uncles and cousins and connections by marriage and their intimate friends were to have everything precisely their own way; but if a vision could have shown him the reformers of a coming generation who would inquire into civil lists and object to sinecures—to say nothing of cutting off the heads of the first families—he would have prayed to be removed before the evil day. Republicanism in his sense was a word exclusive of revolution. Was it, then, a mere meaningless mask intended only to conceal the real man? Before passing such a

judgment we should remember that the names by which people classify their opinions are generally little more than arbitrary badges; and even in these days, when practice treads so closely on the heels of theory, some persons profess to know extreme radicals who could be converted very speedily by a bit of riband. Walpole has explained himself with unmistakable frankness, and his opinion was at least intelligible. He was not a republican after the fashion of Robespierre, or Jefferson, or M. Gambetta; but he had some meaning. When a duke in those days proposed annual parliaments and universal suffrage, we may assume that he did not realize the probable effect of those institutions upon dukes; and when Walpole applauded the regicides, he was not anxious to send George III. to the block. He meant, however, that he considered George III. to be a narrow-minded and obstinate fool. He meant, too, that the great Revolution families ought to distribute the plunder and the power without interference from the Elector of Hanover. He meant, again, that as a quick and cynical observer, he found the names of Brutus and Algernon Sydney very convenient covers for attacking the Duke of Newcastle and the Earl of Bute. But beyond all this, he meant something more, which gives the real spice to his writings. It was something not quite easy to put into formulas; but characteristic of the vague discomfort of the holders of sinecures in those halcyon days arising from the perception that the ground was hollow under their feet. To understand him we must remember that the period of his activity marks precisely the lowest ebb of political principle. Old issues had been settled, and the new ones were only just coming to the surface. He saw the end of the Jacobites and the rise of the demagogues. His early letters describe the advance of the Pretender to Derby; they tell us how the British public was on the whole inclined to look on and cry, "Fight dog, fight bear;" how the Jacobites who had anything to lose left their battle to be fought by half-starved cattle-stealers, and contented themselves with drinking to the success of the cause; and how the Whig magnates, with admirable presence of mind, raised regiments, appointed officers, and got the expenses paid by the Crown. His later letters describe the amazing series of blunders by which we lost America in spite of the clearest warnings from almost every man of sense in the kingdom. The interval between these disgraceful epochs is filled—if we except the brief episode of Chatham—by a series of struggles between different connections—one cannot call them parties—which separate and combine, and fight and make peace, till the plot of the drama becomes too complicated for human ingenuity to unravel. Lads just crammed for a civil service examination might possibly bear in mind all the shifting combinations which resulted from the endless intrigues of Pelhams and Grenvilles and Bedfords and Rockinghams; yet even those omniscient persons could hardly give a plausible account of the principles which each party conceived itself to be maintaining. What, for example, were the politics of a Rigby or a Bubb Dodington? The diary in which the last of these eminent persons reveals his inmost soul is perhaps the most curious specimen of unconscious self-

analysis extant. His utter baseness and venality, his disgust at the "low venal wretches" to whom he had to give bribes; his creeping and crawling before those from whom he sought to extract bribes; his utter incapacity to explain a great man except on the hypothesis of insanity; or to understand that there is such a thing as political morality, derive double piquancy from the profound conviction that he is an ornament to society, and from the pious aspirations which he utters with the utmost simplicity. Bubbs wriggled himself into a peerage, and differed from innumerable competitors only by superior frankness. He is the fitting representative of an era from which political faith has disappeared, as Walpole is its fitting satirist. All political virtue, it is said, was confined in Walpole's opinion, to Conway and the Marquis of Hertford. Was he wrong? or, if he was wrong, was it not rather in the exception than the rule? The dialect in which his sarcasms are expressed is affected, but the substance is hard to dispute. The world, he is fond of saying, is a tragedy to those who feel, a comedy to those who think. He preferred the comedy view. "I have never yet seen or heard," he says, "anything serious that was not ridiculous. Jesuits, Methodists, philosophers, politicians, the hypocrite Rousseau, the scoffer Voltaire, the encyclopedists, the Humes, the Lytteltons, the Grenvilles, the atheist tyrant of Prussia, and the mountebank of history, Mr. Pitt, are all to me but impostors in their various ways. Fame or interest is their object, and after all their parade, I think a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes that the stars are so many farthing candles created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, a wiser and more rational being, and I am sure an honest, than any of them. Oh! I am sick of visions and systems that shove one another aside, and come again like figures in a moving picture." Probably Walpole's belief in the ploughman lasted till he saw the next smock-frock; but the bitterness clothed in the old-fashioned cant is serious and is justifiable enough. Here is a picture of English politics in the time of Wilkes. "No government, no police, London and Middlesex distracted, the colonies in rebellion, Ireland ready to be so, and France arrogant and on the point of being hostile! Lord Bute accused of all, and dying of a panic; George Grenville wanting to make rage desperate; Lord Rockingham and the Cavendishes thinking we have no enemies but Lord Bute, and that five mutes and an epigram can set everything to rights; the Duke of Grafton (then Prime Minister) like an apprentice, thinking the world should be postponed to a horse-race; and the Bedfords not caring what disgraces we undergo while each of them has 3,000*l.* a year and three thousand bottles of claret and champagne!" And every word of this is true—at least, so far as epigrams need be true. It is difficult to put into more graphic language the symptoms of an era just ripe for revolution. If frivolous himself, Walpole can condemn the frivolity of others. "Can one repeat common news with indifference," he asks, just after the surrender of Yorktown, "while our shame is writing for future history by the pens of all our numerous enemies? When did England see two whole armies lay down their arms and surrender them-

selves prisoners? . . . These are thoughts I cannot stifle at the moment that expresses them; and, though I do not doubt that the same dissipation that has swallowed up all our principles will reign again in ten days with its wonted sovereignty, I had rather be silent than vent my indignation. Yet I cannot talk, for I cannot think, on any other subject. It was not six days ago that, in the height of four raging wars (with America, France, Spain, and Holland), I saw in the papers an account of the opera and of the dresses of the company, and hence the town, and thence, of course, the whole nation, were informed that Mr. Fitzpatrick had very little powder in his hair." Walpole sheltered himself behind the corner of a pension to sneer at the tragi-comedy of life; but if his feelings were not profound, they were quick and genuine, and, affectation for affectation, his cynical coxcombry seems preferable to the solemn coxcombry of the men who shamelessly wrangled for plunder, whilst they talked solemn platitudes about sacred Whig principles and the thrice blessed British Constitution.

Walpole, in fact, represents a common creed amongst comfortable but clear-headed men of his time. It was the strange mixture of scepticism and conservatism which is exemplified in such men as Hume and Gibbon. He was at heart a Voltairian, and, like his teacher, confounded all religions and political beliefs under the name of superstition. Voltaire himself did not anticipate the Revolution to which he, more than any man, had contributed. Walpole, with stronger personal reasons than Voltaire for disliking a catastrophe, was as furious as Burke when the volcano burst forth. He was a Republican so far as he disbelieved in the divine right of kings, and hated enthusiasm and loyalty generally. He wished the form to survive and the spirit to disappear. Things were rotten, and he wished them to stay rotten. The ideal to which he is constantly recurring was the pleasant reign of his father, when nobody made a fuss, or went to war, or kept principles except for sale. He foresaw, however, far better than most men the coming crash. If political sagacity be fairly tested by a prophetic vision of the French Revolution, Walpole's name should stand high. He visited Paris in 1765, and remarks that laughing is out of fashion. "Good folks, they have no time to laugh. There is God and the King to be pulled down first, and men and women, one and all, are devoutly employed in the demolition. They think me quite profane for having my belief left." Do you know, he asks presently, who are the philosophers? "In the first place, it comprehends almost everybody, and in the next it means men who, avowing war against Papacy, aim, many of them, at the destruction of regal power. The philosophers," he goes on, "are insupportable, superficial, overbearing, and fanatic. They preach incessantly, and their avowed doctrine is atheism—you could not believe how openly. Don't wonder, therefore, if I should return a Jesuit. Voltaire himself does not satisfy them. One of their lady devotees said of him, '*Il est bigot, c'est un déiste!*'" French politics, he professes a few years afterwards, must end in "despotism, a civil war, or assassination," and he remarks that

the age will not, as he had always thought, be an age of abortion, but rather "the age of seeds that are to produce strange crops hereafter." The next century, he says at a later period, "will probably exhibit a very new era, which the close of this has been, and is, preparing." If these sentences had been uttered by Burke, they would have been quoted as proofs of remarkable sagacity. As it is, we may surely call them stern glances for a frivolous coxcomb.

Walpole regarded these symptoms in the true epicurean spirit, and would have joined in the sentiment, *après moi le déluge*. He was, on the whole, for remedying grievances, and is put rather out of temper by cruelties which cannot be kept out of his sight. He talks with disgust of the old habit of stringing up criminals by the dozen; he denounces the slave-trade with genuine fervour; there is apparent sincerity in his platitudes against war; and he never took so active a part in politics as in the endeavour to prevent the judicial murder of Byng. His conscience generally discharged itself more easily by a few pungent epigrams, and though he wished the reign of reason and humanity to dawn, he would rather that it should not come at all than be ushered in by a tempest. His whole theory is given forcibly and compactly in an answer which he once made to the republican Mrs. Macaulay, and was fond of repeating:—"Madam, if I had been Luther, and could have known that for the chance of saving a million of souls I should be the cause of a million of lives, at least, being sacrificed before my doctrines could be established, it must have been a most palpable angel, and in a most heavenly livery, before he should have set me at work." We will not ask what angel would have induced him to make the minor sacrifice of six thousand a year to establish any conceivable doctrine. Whatever may be the merit of these opinions, they contain Walpole's whole theory of life. I know, he seems to have said to himself, that loyalty is folly, that rank is contemptible, that the old society in which I live is rotten to the core, and that explosive matter is accumulating beneath our feet. Well! I am not made of the stuff for a reformer: I am a bit of a snob, though, like other snobs, I despise both parties to the bargain. I will take the securities the gods provide me, amuse myself with my toys at Strawberry Hill, despise kings and ministers, without endangering my head by attacking them, and be over-polite to a royal duke when he visits me, on condition of laughing at him behind his back when he is gone. Walpole does not deserve a statue; he was not a Wilberforce or a Howard, and as little of a Burke or a Chatham. But his faults, as well as his virtues, qualified him to be the keenest of all observers, of a society unconsciously approaching a period of tremendous convulsions.

To claim for him that, even at his best, he is a profound observer of character, or that he gives any consistent account of his greatest contemporaries, would be too much. He is full of whims, and, moreover, full of spite. He cannot be decently fair to any one who deserted his father, or stood in Conway's light. He reflects at all times the irreverent gossip current behind the scenes. To know the best and the worst that can be said

of any great man, the best plan is to read the leading article of his party newspaper, and then to converse in private with its writer. The eulogy and the sarcasm may both be sincere enough; only it is pleasant, after puffing one's wares to the public, to glance at their seamy side in private. Walpole has a decided taste for that last point of view. The littleness of the great, the hypocrisy of the virtuous, and the selfishness of statesmen in general, is his ruling theme, illustrated by an infinite variety of brilliant caricatures struck off at the moment with a quick eye and a sure hand. Though he elaborates no grand historical portrait, like Burke or Clarendon, he has a whole gallery of telling vignettes which are often as significant as far more pretentious works. Nowhere, for example, can we find more graphic sketches of the great man who stands a head and shoulders above the whole generation of dealers in power and place. Most of Chatham's contemporaries repaid his contempt with intense dislike. Some of them pronounced him mad, and others thought him a knave. Walpole, who at times calls him a mountebank and an impostor, does not go further than Burke, who, in a curious comment, speaks of him as the "grand artificer of fraud," who never conversed but with "a parcel of low toadeaters;" and asks whether all this "theatrical stuffing" and these "raised heels" could be necessary to the character of a great man. Walpole, of course, has a keen eye to the theatrical stuffing. He takes the least complimentary view of the grand problem, which still puzzles some historians, as to the genuineness of Chatham's gout. He smiles complacently when the great actor forgets that his right arm ought to be lying helpless in a sling and flourishes it with his accustomed vigour. But Walpole, in spite of his sneers and sarcasms, can recognize the genuine power of the man. He is the describer of the striking scene when the House of Commons was giggling over some delicious story of bribery and corruption—the House of Commons was frivolous in those benighted days; he tells how Pitt suddenly stalked down from the gallery and administered his thundering reproof; how Murray, then Attorney-General, "crouched, silent and terrified," and the Chancellor of the Exchequer faltered out a humble apology for the unseemly levity. It is Walpole who best describes the great debate when Pitt, "haughty, defiant, conscious of injury and supreme abilities," burst out in that tremendous speech—tremendous if we may believe the contemporary reports, of which the only tolerably preserved fragment is the celebrated metaphor about the confluence of the Rhone and the Saone. Alas! Chatham's eloquence has all gone to rags and tatters; though, to say the truth, it has only gone the way of nine-tenths of our contemporary eloquence. We have indeed what are called accurate reports of spoken pamphlets, dried specimens of rhetoric from which the life has departed as completely as it is strained out of the specimens in a botanical collection. If there is no Walpole amongst us, we shall know what our greatest living orator has said; but how he said it, and how it moved his audience, will be as obscure as if the reporters' gallery was still unknown. Walpole—when he was not affecting philosophy, or smarting from the failure of an intrigue, or

worried by the gout, or disappointed of a bargain at a sale—could throw electric flashes of light on the figure he describes which reveal the true man. He errs from petulancy, but not from stupidity. He can appreciate great qualities by fits, though he cannot be steadily loyal to their possessor. And if he wrote down most of our rulers as knaves and fools, we have only to lower those epithets to selfish and blundering, to get a very fair estimate of their characters. To the picturesque historian his services are invaluable; though no single statement can be accepted without careful correction.

Walpole's social, as distinguished from his political, anecdotes do in one sense what Leech's drawings have done for this. But the keen old man of the world puts a far bitterer and deeper meaning into his apparently superficial scratches than the kindly modern artist, whose satire was narrowed, if purified, by the decencies of modern manners. Walpole reflects in a thousand places that strange combination of brutality and polish which marked the little circle of fine ladies and gentlemen who then constituted society, and played such queer pranks in quiet unconsciousness of the revolutionary elements that were seething below. He is the best of commentators on Hogarth, and gives us *Gin-Lane* on one side and the *Marriage à la mode* on the other. As we turn over the well-known pages we come at every turn upon characteristic scenes of the great tragi-comedy that was being played out. In one page a highwayman puts a bullet through his hat, and on the next we read how three thousand ladies and gentlemen visited the criminal in his cell, on the Sunday before his execution, till he fainted away twice from the heat; then we hear how Lord Lovat's buffooneries made the whole brilliant circle laugh as he was being sentenced to death; and how Balmerino pleaded "not guilty," in order that the ladies might not be deprived of their sport; how the House of Commons adjourned to see a play acted by persons of quality, and the gallery was hung round with blue ribands; how the Gunnings had a guard to protect them in the park; what strange pranks were played by the bigamous Miss Chudleigh; what jokes—now, alas! very faded and dreary—were made by George Selwyn, and how that amiable favourite of society went to Paris in order to see the cruel tortures inflicted upon Damiens, and was introduced to the chief performer on the scaffold as a distinguished amateur in executions. One of the best of all these vignettes portrays the funeral of George II., and is worthy of Thackeray. It opens with the solemn procession to the torch-lighted Abbey, whose "long-drawn aisles and fretted vault" excite the imagination of the author of the *Castle of Otranto*. Then the comic element begins to intrude; the procession jostles and falls into disorder at the entrance of Henry Seventh's Chapel; the bearers stagger under the heavy coffin and cry for help; the bishop blunders in the prayers, and the anthem, as fit, says Walpole, for a wedding as a funeral, becomes immeasurably tedious. Against this tragi-comic background are relieved two characteristic figures. The "butcher" Duke of Cumberland, the hero of Culloden, stands with the obstinate courage of his race

gazing into the vault where his father is being buried, and into which he is soon to descend. His face is distorted by a recent stroke of paralysis, and he is forced to stand for two hours on a bad leg. To him enters the burlesque Duke of Newcastle, who begins by bursting into tears and throwing himself back in a stall whilst the Archbishop "hovers over him with a smelling-bottle." Then curiosity overcomes him, and he runs about the chapel with a spyglass in one hand, to peer into the faces of the company, and mopping his eyes with the other. "Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train to avoid the chill of the marble." What a perch to select! Imagine the contrast of the two men, and remember that the Duke of Newcastle was for an unprecedented time the great dispenser of patronage, and by far the most important personage in the government. Walpole had reason for some of his sneers.

The literary power implied in these brilliant sketches is remarkable, and even if Walpole's style is more Gallicized than is evident to me, it must be confessed that with a few French idioms he has caught something of that unrivalled dexterity and neatness of touch in which the French are our undisputed masters. His literary character is of course marked by an affectation analogous to that which debases his politics. Walpole was always declaring with doubtful sincerity—(that is one of the matters in which a man is scarcely bound to be quite sincere)—that he has no ambition for literary fame, and that he utterly repudiates the title of "learned gentleman." There is too much truth in his disavowals to allow us to write them down as mere mock-modesty; but doubtless his principal motive was a dislike to entering the arena of open criticism. He has much of the feeling which drove Pope into paroxysms of unworthy fury on every mention of Grub-street. The anxiety of men in that day to disavow the character of professional authors, must be taken with the fact that professional authors were then an unscrupulous, scurrilous and venal race. Walpole feared collision with them as he feared collision with the "mountains of roast beef." Though literature was emerging from the back-lanes and alleys, the two greatest potentates of the day, Johnson and Warburton, had both a decided cross of the bear in their composition. Walpole was nervously anxious to keep out of their jurisdiction, and to sit at the feet of such refined lawgivers as Mason and Grey, or the feeble critics of polite society. In such courts there naturally passes a good deal of very flimsy flattery between persons who are alternately at the bar or on the bench. We do not quite believe that Lady Di Beauclerk's drawings were unsurpassable by "Salvator Rosa and Guido," or that Lady Ailesbury's "landscape in worsteds" was a work of high art; and we doubt whether Walpole believed it; nor do we fancy that he expected Sir Horace Mann to believe that when sitting in his room at Strawberry Hill, he was in the habit of apostrophising the setting sun in such terms as these: "Look at you sinking beams! His gaudy reign is over; but the silver moon above that

elm succeeds to a tranquil horizon," &c. Sweeping aside all this superficial rubbish, as mere concessions to the faded taste of the age of hoops and wigs, Walpole has something to say for himself. He has been condemned for the absurdity of his criticisms, and it is undeniable that he sometimes blunders strangely. It would, indeed, be easy to show, were it worth while, that he is by no means so silly in his contemporary verdicts as might be supposed from scattered passages in his letters. But what are we to say to a man who compares Dante to "a Methodist parson in Bedlam?" The first answer is that, in this instance Walpole was countenanced by greater men. Voltaire, with all his faults the most consummate literary artist of the century, says with obvious disgust that there are people to be found who force themselves to admire "feats of imagination as stupidly extravagant and barbarous" as those of the *Divina Commedia*. Walpole must be reckoned as belonging both in his faults and his merits to the Voltairian school of literature, and amongst other peculiarities common to the master and his disciple, may be counted an incapacity for reverence and an intense dislike to being bored. For these reasons he hates all epic poets from Dante to Blackmore; he detests all didactic poems, including those of Thomson and Akenside; and he is utterly scandalized by the French enthusiasm for Richardson. In these last judgments, at least, nine-tenths of the existing race of mankind agree with him; though few people have the courage to express their agreement in print. We may be thankful that Walpole, which is not always the case, is as incapable of boring as of enduring bores. He is one of the few Englishmen who share the quality sometimes ascribed to the French as a nation, and certainly enjoyed by his teacher, Voltaire; namely, that though they may be frivolous, blasphemous, indecent, and faulty in every other way, they can never for a single moment be dull. His letters show that crisp, sparkling quality of style which accompanies this power, and which is so unattainable to most of his countrymen. The quality is less conspicuous in the rest of his works, and the light verses and essays in which we might expect him to succeed are disappointingly weak. Xoho's letter to his countrymen is now as dull as the work of most imaginary travellers, and the essays in *The World* are remarkably inferior to the *Spectator*, to say nothing of the *Rambler*.^{*} Yet Walpole's place in literature is unmistakable, if of equivocal merit. Byron called him the author of the last tragedy and the first romance in our language. The tragedy, with Byron's leave, is revolting (perhaps the reason why Byron admired it), and the romance passes the borders of the burlesque. And yet the remark hits off a singular point in Walpole's history. A thorough child of the eighteenth century, we might have expected him to share Voltaire's indiscriminating contempt for the middle ages. One would have supposed that in his lips, as in those of all his generation, Gothic would have been synonymous with barbaric, and the admiration of an ancient abbey as

* It is odd that in one of these papers Walpole proposes, in jest, precisely our modern system of postage cards, only charging a penny instead of a halfpenny.

redundant as admiration of Dante. So far from which, Walpole is almost the first modern Englishman who found out that our old cathedrals were really beautiful. He discovered that a most charming toy might be made of mediævalism. Strawberry Hill, with all its gimeracks, its paste-board battlements, and stained-paper carvings, was the lineal ancestor of the new law-courts. The restorers of churches, the manufacturers of stained glass, the modern decorators and architects of all vanities—perhaps, we may venture to add, the Ritualists and the High Church party—should think of him with kindness. It cannot be said that they should give him a place in their calendar, for he was not of the stuff of which saints are made. It was a very thin veneering of mediævalism which covered his modern creed; and the mixture is not particularly edifying. Still he undoubtedly found out that charming plaything which, in other hands, has been elaborated and industriously constructed till it is all but indistinguishable from the genuine article. Some persons hold it to be merely a plaything, when all has been said and done, and maintain that when the root has once been severed, the tree can never again be made to grow. However that may be, Walpole's trifling was the first forerunner of much that has occupied the minds of much greater artists ever since. And thus his initiative in literature has been as fruitful as his initiative in art. The *Castle of Otranto* and the *Mysterious Mother* were the progenitors of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, and probably had a strong influence upon the author of *Ivanhoe*. Frowning castles and gloomy monasteries, knights in armour, and ladies in distress, and monks and nuns and hermits, all the scenery and the characters that have peopled the imagination of the romantic school, may be said to have had their origin on the night when Walpole lay down to sleep, his head crammed full of Wardour-street curiosities, and dreamt that he saw a gigantic hand in armour resting on the banister of his staircase. In three months from that time he had elaborated a story, the object of which, as defined by himself, was to combine the charms of the old romance and the modern novel, and which, to say the least, strikes us now like an exaggerated caricature of the later school. Scott criticises the *Castle of Otranto* seriously, and even Macaulay speaks of it with a certain respect. Absurd as the burlesque seems, our ancestors found it amusing, and, what is stranger, awe inspiring. Excitable readers shuddered when a helmet of more than gigantic size fell from the clouds, in the first chapter, and crushed the young baron to atoms on the eve of his wedding, as a trap smashes a mouse. This, however, was merely a foretaste of a series of unprecedented phenomena. At one moment the portrait of Manfred's grandfather, without the least premonitory warning, utters a deep sigh, and heaves its breast, after which it descends to the floor with a grave and melancholy air. Presently the menials catch sight of a leg and foot in armour to match the helmet, and apparently belonging to a ghost which has lain down promiscuously in the picture gallery. Most appalling, however, of all is the adventure which happened to Count Frederick in the oratory. Kneeling before the altar was a tall figure in a long cloak. As

he approached it rose, and, turning round, disclosed to him the fleshless jaws and empty eyesockets of a skeleton. The ghost disappeared as ghosts generally do after giving a perfectly unnecessary warning, and the catastrophe is soon reached by the final appearance of the whole suit of armour with the ghost inside it, who bursts the castle to bits like an eggshell, and, towering towards the sky, exclaims, "Theodore is the true heir of Alfonso!" This proceeding fortunately made a lawsuit unnecessary, and if the castle was ruined at once, it is not quite impossible that the same result might have been attained more slowly by litigation. The whole machinery strikes us as simply babyish, and sometimes we suspect Walpole of laughing in his sleeve; as, for example, in the solemn scene in the chapel, which closes thus:—"As he spake these words, three drops of blood fell from the nose of Alphonso's statue" (Alphonso is the spectre in armour). "Manfred turned pale, and the princess sank on her knees. 'Behold!' said the friar, 'mark this miraculous indication that the blood of Alfonso will never mix with that of Manfred!'" Nor can we think that the story is rendered much more interesting by Walpole's simple expedient of introducing into the midst of these portents a set of waiting-maids and peasants, who talk in the familiar style of the smart valets in Congreve's or Sheridan's comedies.

Yet, babyish as this mass of nursery tales may appear to us, it is curious that the theory which Walpole advocated has been exactly carried out. He wished to relieve the prosaic realism of the school of Fielding and Smollett by making use of the romantic associations, without altogether taking leave of the language of common life. He sought to make real men and women out of mediæval knights and ladies, or, in other words, he made a first experimental trip into the province afterwards occupied by Scott. The *Mysterious Mother* is in the same taste; and his interest in Ossian, in Chatterton, and in Percy's Relics, is another proof of his anticipation of the coming change of sentiment. He was an arrant trifler, it is true; too delicately constituted for real work in literature and politics, and inclined to take a cynical view of his contemporaries generally, he turned for amusement to antiquarianism, and was the first to set modern art and literature masquerading in the antique dresses. That he was quite conscious of the necessity for more serious study, appears in his letters, in one of which, for example, he proposes a systematic history of Gothic architecture, such as has since been often enough executed. It does not, it may be said, require any great intellect or even any exquisite taste for a fine gentleman to strike out a new line of dilettante amusement. In truth, Walpole has no pretensions whatever to be regarded as a great original creator, or even as one of the few infallible critics. The only man of his kind who had more claim to that lost title was his friend Gray, who shared his Gothic tastes with greatly superior knowledge. But he was indefinitely superior to the great mass of commonplace writers who attain a kind of bastard infallibility by always accepting the average verdict of the time; which, on the principle of the *vox populi*, is more often right than that of any dissenter. There is an intermediate

class of men who are useful as sensitive barometers to foretell coming changes of opinion. Their intellects are mobile if shallow; and, perhaps, their want of serious interest in contemporary intellects renders them more accessible to the earliest symptoms of superficial shiftings of taste. They are anxious to be at the head of the fashions in thought as well as in dress, and pure love of novelty serves to some extent in place of genuine originality. Amongst such men, Walpole deserves a high place; and it is not easy to obtain a high place even amongst such men. The people who succeed best at trifles are those who are capable of something better. In spite of Johnson's aphorism, it is the colossus who, when he tries, can cut the best heads upon cherry-stones, as well as hew statues out of rock. Walpole was no colossus; but his peevish anxiety to affect even more frivolity than was really natural to him, has blinded his critics to the real power of a remarkably acute, versatile, and original intellect. We cannot regard him with much respect, and still less with much affection; but the more we examine his work, the more we shall admire his extreme cleverness.

Buried Self.

WHERE side by side we sat I sit alone,
 But surely hear the absent voice—as one
 Who playing, when the tune he plays is done,
 Hears the spent music through the strings yet moan.
 I rove through places that my soul has known.
 Like the sad ghost of some departed nun
 Who comes between the moonrise and the sun
 To sit beside her monumental stone.
 So by my buried self I take my seat,
 And talk with other ghosts of vanished days.
 And watch grey shadows through the twilight fleet,
 And half expect to see the buried face
 Of my dead self rise in the silent place,
 To look at me with mournful eyes and sweet.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

Pearl and Emerald.

CHAPTER VI.

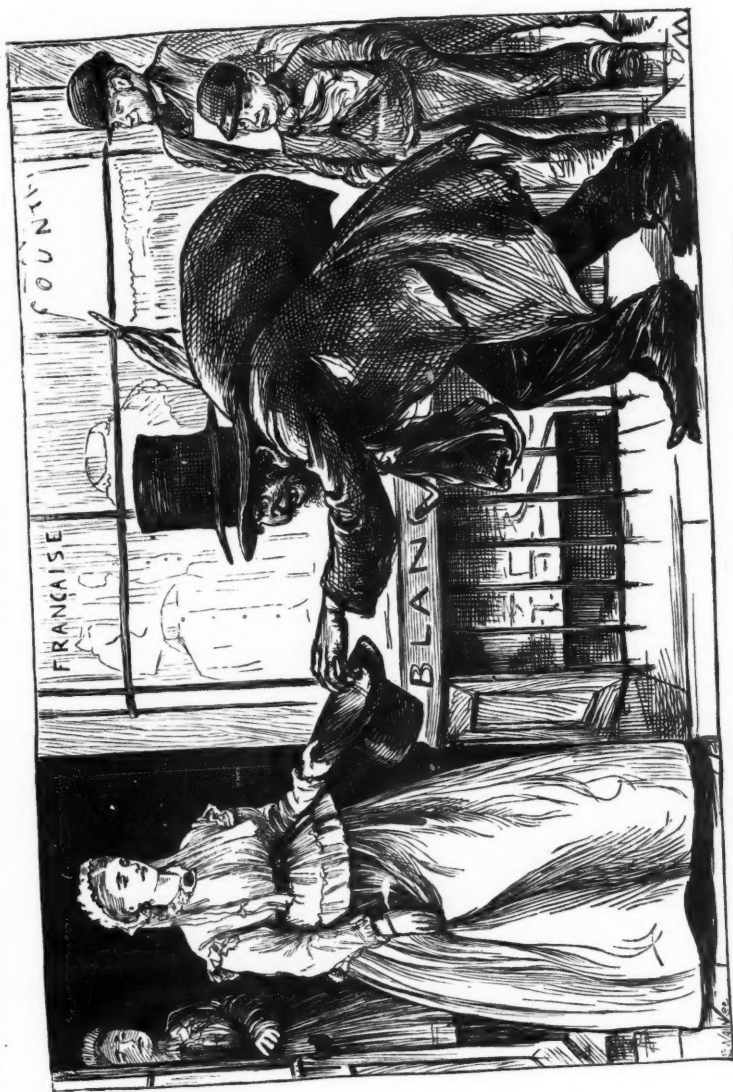
THE GREAT EMERALD OF KANDAHAR.



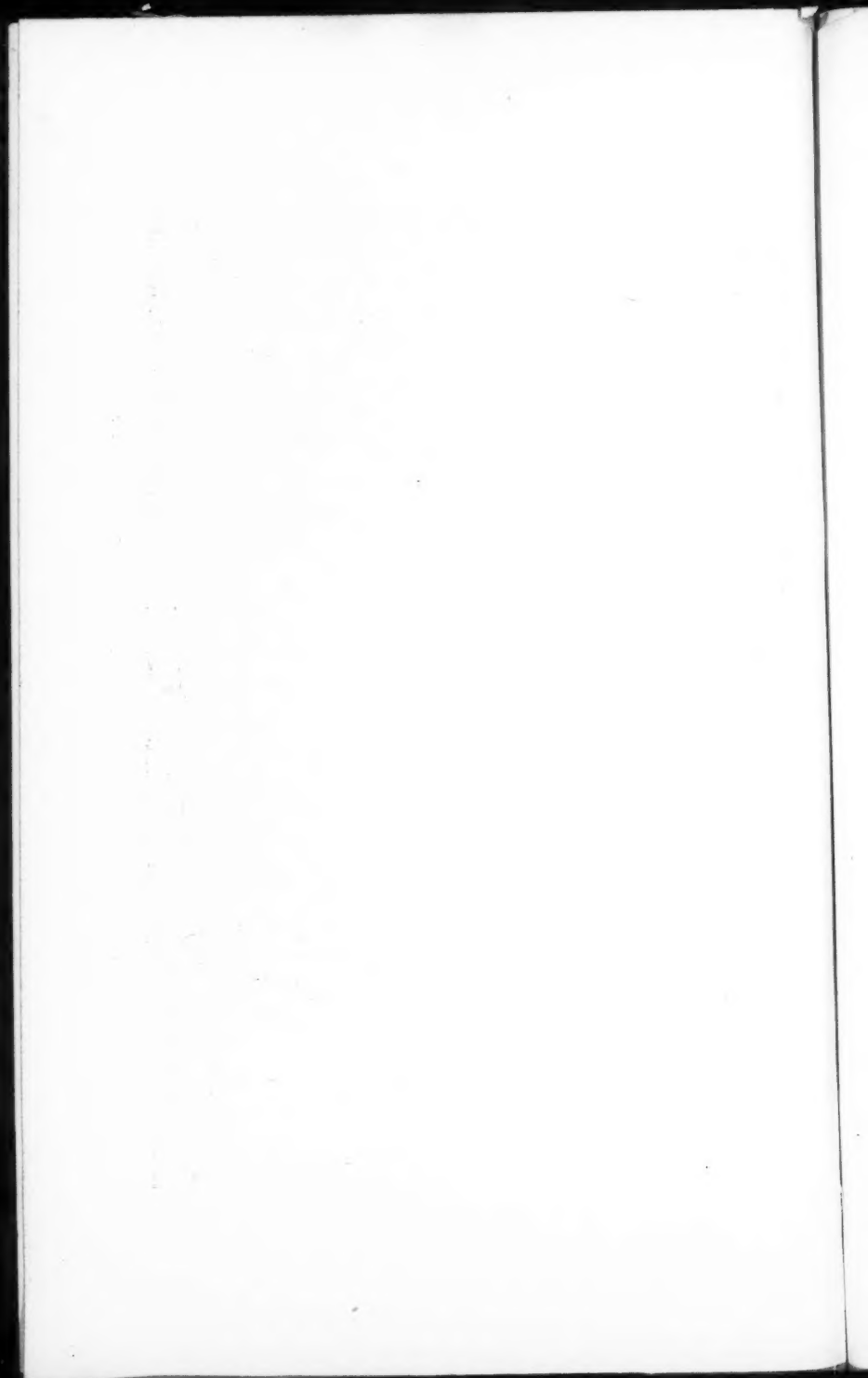
WOULD his disappointment have driven him mad indeed? Was he really ripe for the certificate of two physicians? Any one would certainly have thought so, to have seen him dancing, leaping, and laughing wildly about the disordered room. He absolutely shrieked with laughter, and pressed to his heart in ecstacy the rags of the magpie and then the piece of green crystal that had fallen from the broken frame. A piece of green crystal, indeed? Nay, a queen, a goddess, a dream of light, an ecstacy of glory! He kissed it and mumbled it; he would have worshipped it in his frenzy. So outrageous was his triumph, that his valet came

running to the door, followed by half the startled household. Mrs. Levi sent old Judith herself to see what was the matter. Hastily recalled to himself, he threw a piece of paper over his new-found treasure, unlocked the door, scolded the servants for their attempted intrusion, locked and double locked it again, and then sat down more calmly to gloat over his prize of prizes.

Every dealer and jewel broker has heard of the Great Emerald of Kandahar. It is the great poetical tradition of the trade; greater, even, than the Koh-i-noor, the Pitt Diamond, or the Queen Ruby of Calcutta. It has been the cause of bloodier wars and darker crimes than ambition itself, from the days when it had been presented to King Solomon by the Queen of Sheba as the noblest ornament of the Temple, to those, some few centuries ago, when it formed part of the royal crown of the Czars of Caspia. But it was not unknown to the initiated in the secret history of crown jewels, that the great emerald had for some time past vanished from human sight. It had either been lost or stolen or hidden away—or else, as it now seemed, it had been secretly pledged with the great house



A YOUNG FELLOW-WORKMAN OF THEIRS HANDED IT TO ITS OWNER QUIETLY.



that had dealt so magnificently with royal loans. But its description, its shape, the manner of its cutting, the exact number of its carats, were all a matter of history; and what was more likely than that the lender should conceal his dangerous security in the most improbable place in the world?

Of course, this hunchbacked Jew had heard, like others, of the great emerald, and before it he sat,—or was it he any longer? Had he not rather suddenly grown into an Adonis? Absorbed in reflection, like a second Newton absorbed in some theory of light, he would, at all events, have passed for a model of Narcissus gazing into an enchanted stream. The poetry of beauty combined with the poetry of boundless wealth to dazzle his eyes, his brain, and his soul. He delivered himself up to the most enchanting dreams. No wonder that Mr. Grode had been willing to risk all he was worth in the world for the chance of securing such a prize. A paltry eighty thousand, indeed, for what was worth six million! As he looked, the great emerald seemed to grow brighter and brighter—to swell larger and larger, until it seemed to light and to fill up the whole room with its splendour. He sat in a very atmosphere of emerald. It even seemed to speak audibly to him with the voices of strange birds, blended into almost intelligible song.

No wonder that men have a passion for precious stones that, to the philosopher, appears to be one of the very maddest of all mad passions. To place an exorbitant value upon a mere piece of crystal, merely because it glitters and is rare—is it not obvious folly? And yet there are good reasons, perfectly natural and perfectly human, for such a proceeding—it is not only because precious stones are the only bright things on earth that never fade. There is some poetry at the heart of every man and woman in the world: even avarice refuses to be quite prosaic. Indeed, even as the hearts of the avaricious are of set purpose, and by deliberate constraint, the most prosaic of all, so is poetic reaction the harder with them when it comes. To one who finds beauty and poetry everywhere, a jewel is but one beautiful thing the more in a world of beautiful things. It is no less, but, at the same time, no more beautiful than a sunbeam or a blossom. But to him who sees no beauty in the sunbeam beyond its suggestion of gold, none in the blossom but its presage of future marketable fruit, a diamond or an emerald contains in itself all the beauty that his soul can conceive or desire. He can worship beauty and mammon at the same time, and become a poet without ceasing to be a sensible and practical man.

No doubt, to Nathan Levi the beauty of the great emerald lay in its six millions. Had it been worth six pence, he would have crushed it under his heavy feet, even though it would still have been just as beautiful. But two hundred and forty million sixpences! The very words contained a romance, and would have called into existence brightness and beauty had they not in reality been there; but, as they were there in reality, they also made their voices heard.

He looked into the transparent depths of what seemed to him to be an ocean of green light, pervaded by a legion of the invisible fairies that take the place of toiling gnomes when a jewel has been drawn from the mine and carved into brightness. But wherever there are fairies, there is song. The bird-like singing that thrilled and trembled through his ears grew by degrees even more intelligible.

"You hideous, ill-grained mortal," it said, "you are now the greatest man on all the earth! You hold in your hands a talisman of wealth and of power. Were it known to be yours, men would grovel at your feet—women would race one another to your arms. You might trample on the necks of kings, and queens would cover your ogre-lips with kisses, and rest your head upon their white bosoms. Deep within the mountain caverns I was formed ere man was dreamed of: gnomes have toiled and Titans laboured to create me what I am: dreams of sunlight gave me brightness, and the echoes of the ocean, carried upon winds of fragrance, gave me hue and gave me form. Then the hands of mighty princes tore me from my depths of darkness, gave me to the jewel-fairies who now sparkle in my sea; and the fairies also laboured, plunging me in living sunshine, made me look on living water, till they crowned me Queen of Gems. Look upon my light and wonder, who am more than countless treasure: gold is dross, and silver nothing—something more than these am I!"

And so, for many a long hour, the light of the crystal seemed to enter his ears as well as his eyes in a sort of rhymeless melody, singing the praises of that which gave him glory. He could not tear himself from his treasure: he neither ate nor drank nor refreshed himself with sleep: he could only look and listen, fairly intoxicated with the joy of possession.

CHAPTER VII.

FIDELIS INFIDELIS.

MR. GRODE was quite in earnest when he turned his own daughter out of doors. Perhaps, had he slept on the matter first, he might have changed his mind; but, as things were, he did not repent of his proceeding when he got up the next morning and found that she was gone. He was not one to own, even to himself, that he had been in the wrong. "A good riddance of bad rubbish," was the whole of his commentary upon the affair.

At all events, he had quite given Felicia to understand that he was fully in earnest; and she, no doubt, knew her father's temper better than any one else could know it. Without waiting to argue the question—perhaps, by her sense of injustice, rendered too proud to do so—she went straight to her room, battling against her headache as well as she could, and packed up what she considered necessities for her undefined journey. Her idea of what were necessities and what were not would, however, by

no means have coincided with that of an old traveller or of a woman of the world. She left behind her almost all her dresses, and the greater part of her ornaments, which had been paid for by her father; but she carefully put into her single trunk an extraordinary number of letters, all written in the same male hand, and certain other trifles, which could have been of no use to any one in the world, including the offending brooch of green crystal, of which, indeed, she took even especial care. Since she had been forbidden to wear it, it had grown, as a companion in misfortune, dearer than ever in her eyes. By this time, or, rather, long before this time, the cab had come to the door. On going downstairs, she met Elise, who had been also engaged in putting up her effects, though in a more business-like manner. The latter was in a high state of anger, scarcely mitigated by the receipt of her month's wages, which her late master had thought it best to pay, and which she, in spite of her anger, had thought it best to take.

"I was coming to say good-by to you, mademoiselle." She spoke rather pertly, and by no means kindly.

"Oh! Elise," said Felicia, humbly, "I am so sorry that this should have fallen on you too."

"Oh, never mind me, mademoiselle. I'm not sorry to go. I can get another place to-morrow, I daresay. I should have given warning myself very soon. I have no notion of being treated like dirt—*moi!*"

"Elise!"

"Oh, I have no fault to find with you, mademoiselle—*point du tout!* But I may say what I like now, and I say that monsieur, mademoiselle's father, is what you call a brute—there!"

"You must not talk so. He will see how unjust he has been soon."

"But mademoiselle is going?"

Felicia did not answer—she only took out her purse, in which were a few sovereigns.

"You have always been very good to me, Elise," she said; "if I could, I would keep you with me still. I shall always think of you kindly, and I want you always to think kindly of me. Will you take this, and buy yourself some little present to remember me by?"

"Ah, mademoiselle is too good to have such a father! Thank you many times, mademoiselle; but perhaps mademoiselle will not be returning home just yet? Perhaps she will still want some one for a little while? I will stay with mademoiselle till I find a place. Only return here, even with mademoiselle—*jamais!*"

"I'm afraid we must part, Elise. Where are you going?"

"Mademoiselle will not want me?—home, then!"

"And where is that—in France?"

"No, mademoiselle; I have only a mother: she has a *blanchisserie* in Scho."

"And you will go to her?" And Felicia sighed.

"And you, mademoiselle?"

"Ah, Elise, you are better off than I!"

"I?"

"Yes, you, Elise. You have a mother—you have a home. I have no friends now—except——" But she did not name her exception.

"Mademoiselle has no friends?" And Elise opened her eyes in wonder.

"None."

"But when Mr. Cranstoun knows?"

"Mr. Cranstoun will not know."

Elise opened her eyes still more widely. A sudden thought struck Felicia.

"Elise," she said, "will you do me a favour?"

"With pleasure, mademoiselle."

"Take me home with you."

If the eyes of Elise had opened widely enough before, they now opened into saucers; but Felicia gave her no time to put her astonishment into words.

"I am young, and I am strong," she went on; "it is true that I am not clever, like some girls are. I can't sing, I can't draw, I can't play; but I can sew, and I can run about, and I can work hard. When this is empty,"—and she held up her purse—"I must earn my bread, like you. Do you understand me? I will go to your mother, I will help her, if she will have me, and I will ask for no wages till I can earn them and till my last penny is gone. Do you think she will have me?"

"You, mademoiselle? you at the *blanchisserie*?"

"Will she not have me then, Elise?"

"Is mademoiselle in earnest?"

"In perfect earnest. If I do not go with you I have nowhere to go."

"Ah, mademoiselle, if that is so—but it will be a poor place for mademoiselle."

"A poor place? Then it will be the fitter for me. Elise, I am thrown upon the world. I have always tried to be kind to you: will you also refuse me the shelter of a roof, the chance to earn my bread?"

"Ah, it is not that, mademoiselle!"

"Only for a few nights, then?"

"Ah, you are welcome to all we can give! Mademoiselle is determined, then?"

"Quite determined. I shall be no burden to you: I will pay for my lodging and my teaching, and then I will work hard. I may come, then?"

The two girls, now companions, set off at once in the cab, without again seeing Mr. Grode, who had shut himself up in his front parlour. Their journey was not long: a short quarter of an hour saw them descend in a poor and dingy street, full of mist and blackness and doubtful odour, which, to Felicia at least, was as strange as if it had been a thousand leagues away.

Elise got out first, and rang the bell of a shabby door flanked by large

wooden shutters. After another minute or two she rang again; and then, in a minute or two more, was heard a scuffling of feet in the passage, and the rattling of a chain. At last the door opened upon a dark narrow passage, feebly lighted by a tallow candle, carried by an elderly woman in a large cap and a sort of dressing-gown.

"*Est-ce toi, Elise ?*" cried out the candle-bearer in a shrill French voice.

"*Ah, maman, c'est moi !*" And the two threw themselves into one another's arms.

Then came a whispered conversation, while Felicia sat in the cab and waited. At last Elise returned to the window, and bade her descend.

Her headache had increased during her ride: she felt as though she was being hurried through foreign countries in a dream, leaving her own self far behind her. She did not regret the old life: she was even anxious to begin the new. Did not the only part of it that was worth having belong to the new as well as to the old? But still she felt miserable and worn out, and no wonder. It had been an exciting day, to say the least of it.

"Are you Madame Cornet?" she asked deprecatingly of the old lady, of whom she felt rather in awe.

"Madame Cornet, widow and *blanchisseuse Française*—*si, ma pauvre petite !* But do not talk now. I shall make you some coffee, and we shall talk to-morrow. But for a chamber——"

"Oh, Madame Cornet, anywhere will do for me!"

"Josephine," cried out Madame Cornet, in French, to some invisible member of the household, "Elise has come home, and brought a young lady with her. Make some coffee at once—immediately; and then see if your room is fit to sleep in, and be quick with the coffee."

Felicia had an instinctive dislike of giving trouble, and began to be afraid that she was giving a great deal. But her protests were overruled, and before long, having been refreshed by some very bad and very weak coffee, she found herself in a small and close room, furnished with a bed and a broken chair. She, even at starting, began to miss her own delicate comforts terribly; but she was worn out, and she was young, and so the bed was quite good enough to bring her sound and refreshing sleep—nay, better than refreshing, for it proved the entrance to the better world of dreams.

If she intended seriously to become a good workwoman, she certainly began badly. When she woke, it was very late indeed; and even then it was some time before she could summon up courage to rise. It was not that she felt in the least ill, but she began to feel that the resolution to earn one's own bread and to be independent is very easy to make overnight, but not quite so easy to carry out in the face of the morning. She was ashamed to think that she scarcely knew how to rise without some attendance, and she certainly did not know how to wash

without either soap or water or towels, of none of which things did she see a sign. They did not seem to be included in Josephine's notions of making a room fit for a young lady to sleep in. She had not been able to complain of her bed, hard as it was; but otherwise she was brought face to face with discomfort for the first time, and that is a harder experience than those who have never undergone it might suppose. She felt very forgotten and very strange.

At last, when she was on the point of placing her feet upon the carpetless floor, Elise opened the door and came in, and set about doing what she could for her late mistress, not, perhaps, like a servant any longer, but certainly like a friend.

"I would have come before," she began to explain, "but thought it better to let mademoiselle have her sleep out. We were all up and stirring at six o'clock." And so she began to chatter, and the chatter did Felicia a great deal of good.

She did manage to obtain some water—though, considering that her hostess was a washerwoman, not without some difficulty. Elise also brought her up some coffee, much better than that of the night before, with some bread-and-butter. They were evidently treating her *en princesse*. At last, dressed as plainly as she could manage, she crept downstairs into the parlour. A man, leaning against the chimney-piece, turned round as she entered, and she saw Arthur Cranstoun. At all events, Elise had not overslept herself that morning, nor, though he was not fond of early rising, had he. Poor Felicia! In spite of herself, her promise seemed destined to be broken; and as for him, he, fairly enough as I think, held himself absolved.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOUBLE LIFE.

EVEN in the shortest story, which hurries itself along as fast as may be over a short space of time, and yet endeavours to tell all things that need be known about everybody with whom it is concerned, there must be occasional intervals during which nothing happens, and about which there is absolutely nothing to tell—in which the streams of the lives of those with whom it deals do not blend, but flow in independent and parallel courses. So it was with Mr. Grode, so it was with Felicia, so with Arthur Cranstoun, so with Nathan Levi during the few months that followed the departure from her home of the second-named of these. Each lived his or her own life, and went on in his or her own way; and that is about all that can be said of any of them. But as no one can go on his own way without at last arriving somewhere, and as that somewhere is all with which a short story has to do:—

There is, then—to let these same few months drop unnoticed into the sea of oblivion—a certain part of Soho which is almost as much a French

colony as Algiers itself. There the hungry man has to satisfy himself with strange ragouts of horse-flesh and beans, and the exhausted to recruit his energies with absinthe, though within a stone's-throw of roast-beef and pale ale. The geography of this colony is a little arbitrary, for sometimes it has taken complete possession of one side of a street, without encroaching in the least upon the other; but to those who know the district, it is well marked enough. It is here that lodge by night those who by day are the *habitués* of Coventry Street and the Quadrant; it is here that they hatch conspiracies as addled as the eggs whereof too often they have to make their omelettes *aux fines herbes*; and it is here that they get washed, to a too quickly evanescent whiteness, the scanty linen which has so much the air of having been born with the jaundice.

In one of these small streets, to which the possession of a "*blanchisserie Française*" gave quite an ill-deserved suggestion of superior cleanliness, with its snowy gauze curtains and its prospect, through the ever-open door, of two or three rosy Norman faces in semi-Norman caps, whose owners were eternally engaged in crimping, clear-starching, and chattering—if these are the proper technical terms to describe their occupation—were to be seen as many eccentric specimens of human nature as in any part of London. I do not mean the army of unhealthy gutter-children, and of other Arab tribes that made this street their playground, their schoolroom, and their home: these were not out of the common, heaven knows. I mean rather those who passed along it in the morning and evening, on their way elsewhere; those who had to leave their country for their country's good or ill, as the case might be, and had found a refuge in Soho. The cloaks and beards and hats familiar to Bean Street, and which there passed unnoticed, were wholly unfamiliar elsewhere, and would have gathered starers in Mayfair and a mob in the Strand. But it is not with exiled patriots and swindlers that we have to do now. It is with a certain old-clothesman, who invariably took Bean Street on his way to his daily business.

He was a very old-clothesman of old clothesmen, of a well-known and historical type that has of late years been a little on the wane. He carried on his back the orthodox black bag, and wore upon his head the orthodox three hats, if not more, while he was dressed in his greasiest, most incongruous, oldest clothes of all—greasy, incongruous, and old beyond possibility of purchase or sale. Nor could one hear his cry without ascribing him at once to the orthodox and traditional nation of his calling. But how he could find any one to deal with him was almost inconceivable. He had simply the most hideous face in all London, and was deformed in body besides.

On his first appearance in Bean Street, he had created quite a sensation even there, accustomed as it was to strange appearances. A well-directed stone had struck off the topmost of his three hats; and he, in revenge, had caught hold—not of the offending urchin—but of a small boy who was gazing at him open-mouthed, and had given him such a

thrashing with an old umbrella, that "I'll give you to old Mo to put you in his bag!" became henceforth the best and surest way of stopping the crying of all the unruly babies within a mile. The hat itself had rolled to the door of the *blanchisserie*, where it was picked up by one of the girls—not, however, one of the rosy-faced *Normandes*, but by a young fellow-workwoman of theirs, who handed it to its owner quietly, and without any outward symptom of disgust or fear. He, however, did not even say "Thank you," but scowled fiercely at her and passed on.

The next day he passed the *blanchisserie* again, and passed also the same young girl, who was entering the door at the moment, so closely that she, being engaged in wool-gathering, just brushed him inadvertently with her dress. She recognized him—how, indeed, could she help it?—and instinctively wished him "Good morning" as he went on his way.

Perhaps had he been a young and good-looking fellow, he would have had to wait a great many mornings for his salutation: but, being as he was, the bestowal of two kind words upon him was something in the nature of a charity. And though he did not appear to have heard them, they could not have been disagreeable to one whom nature and poverty must have rendered singularly inexperienced in pleasant greetings. Perhaps, however, he may have had a suspicion that it was his nature and his poverty that had gained him this: and, if he did think so, he was not far wrong. There is many a tender-hearted girl who lavishes her best caresses upon her ugliest and cheapest doll; many a mother who shows most affection for her worst-favoured child, simply because it is cheapest, ugliest, or worst-favoured: and such caresses are, therefore, not complimentary to the object of them. The next day, this girl, who must surely in her childhood have singled out some preposterously hideous doll for her especial favourite, was working with her needle as he passed the door. Her companions, with looks of disgust, pointed him out to each other as they would have pointed out a toad. But she, doubtless for that very reason, frankly greeted him with a real smile. Doubtless she felt, unconsciously, as some tender-hearted girls will, that it is just the toads and spiders that stand most in need of their smiles: that if God, for some mysterious reason, had thought fit to curse this man, it was not for her to turn aside with loathing from what God had done. There are some whose natural mission it is to deal out kind looks and kind words to those whom others scorn; and theirs is a ninth Beatitude.

But this, though the most remarkable event in it, was by no means the whole of his day. He found some customers, though not many: he had not to draw upon his purse very largely to invest in the cast-off garments that it was his business to sell again. And, when he did draw upon his purse, it was with unwillingness written in every crook of his crooked fingers. He looked at both sides of a shilling, he even felt round the edge before he laid it down; and if one shilling happened to be ever so little thinner than another, it was the thicker of the two that he took,

with the thinner that he paid. Before sunset—it was the eve of the Sabbath—he turned homewards. He had not tasted food all day: but, though his belly was empty of all but gnawing pains, a more contented look began to pass over his face, and his hands relaxed their clutch a little as he came in sight of his home—a wretched-looking slop-shop in a street of Soho to which Bean Street was a quarter of palaces. Every street has some other to which itself is aristocratic: perhaps there is even some worse street than this, though even in the backslums of Lambeth or of Westminster it would be hard to find. Still, home—so they say, at least—is always home. Perhaps even he had some heart—though it must have been a strange one—to which even such a form as his was dear: a mother, perhaps, or a sister, with whom he was about to spend a Sabbath of sympathy.

But, in spite of the look of pleased anticipation that his features strove to wear, no voice greeted him as he entered the darkness of his shop. He put up the shutters, sighed the sigh of relief that is drawn by a man who hates his toil when his day of toil is over at last, and then set to work to devour hungrily some strange-looking food that he took from a musty and mouse-eaten cupboard. It is not so that men feed, however poor they may be, who do not live alone. Then he washed himself after a fashion, went into a wretched rat-run back-room, with a single blindless window that looked out into a small blind court heaped up with dust and offal, and with no furniture save a ragged mattress and the remnant of an office stool, took a key from his breast-pocket, and set down his candle upon the floor. It was a wax-candle, by the way, of the very best quality; altogether out of keeping with the place and with the man.

No one can imagine a scene of more utter, more sordid destitution. To say that it was not comfortable would be to say nothing at all, any more than to say the old-clothesman was not handsome. It was the home of a miser, or else, saving the ragged stock-in-trade, of an outdoor pauper: there was no saying which of the two. The neighbours, of course, who were chiefly Irishmen and paupers, took the former view: for when was a Hebrew dealer, though he dealt but in cast-off clothes, ever looked upon by his poverty-stricken neighbours as being one with themselves? His solitary manner of existence, his meals, with which the itinerant dealer in "faggots" had far more to do than the butcher, his miserable clothes, all pointed in the same direction: while his appearance and manner threw a fearful sort of mystery over his apparent poverty. And, in point of fact, there have been men who have lived like him, and yet have lived and died millionaires.

The key which he had taken from his pocket he inserted in a small round hole close to the spot at which he had set down the candle, and then, having turned it twice, raised a very small trap-door that had been formed by sawing out about sixteen square inches of the floor. Into this he inserted his fingers, or rather claws, and extracted from it a small jeweller's casket, which he placed upon his knees as he sat on the ground,

in such a manner that the rays of the candle might fall upon its contents as soon as it was opened.

He opened the case, and the expression of his eyes showed that this object, whatever it might be, was something that made up for all—for hunger, for contempt, for misery. It was this that stood to him in place of all that was wanting to make his abode a home. And, in fact, when the casket was opened, the room in reality appeared to be transformed. It became filled with a strange green light, as of some unearthly morning: of the day which may be imagined to exist for the eyes of mine-goblins who have never seen that of the sun. To him, at least, this light, whether real or imaginary, had an intoxicating effect, something like that of opium or hashish.

The bare, wretched room became the chamber of a vast palace, in which he reclined luxuriously, like some great king, waited upon by countless slaves. All that can delight the senses—beautiful forms and colours, enchanting music, miraculously fragrant odours, seemed to fill the air and to pass into his soul. The stone was a veritable lamp of Aladdin. He sat there without moving, steeped in the enjoyment of imaginary luxuries unknown, unheard of, save in oriental romance, until the grey light of the morning struggled through the window and touched the dream with the wand of truth. Then, with a heavy sigh, he looked timidly around him, closed the casket, returned it to its hiding-place, blew out the candle, and threw himself wearily upon his mattress to take a few hours of heavy slumber.

No wonder, therefore, that such a smile of eager anticipation had lighted up his hideous face as he returned home: no wonder that he had spared only the fewest possible moments to refresh himself with bodily food when a feast like this was waiting for his soul. He who thus spent his night was, on the principle of action and reaction, obliged to wander about in an unprofitable dream all day long, in which his soul was engrossed, not with what was, but with the recollections of what had been, and with anticipations of what was to be as soon as night returned again. For many months he had been growing poorer and poorer: but he made no effort to keep back the sea of poverty. So absorbed had he become in a life made up of intoxicating dreams, that he had been unable to attend to the most ordinary or the most pressing affairs. It seemed as though the excitement of the sale, or something else, had actually turned his brain. His letters had at first remained unanswered, and then unread: the schemes and projects in which he had been engaged rotted or ripened to his ruin: he neither bought or sold or lent, until little by little, he fell under water, and had to force himself to struggle for mere daily bread. He who had once dealt in Titians and Rafaelles now dealt only in cast-off hats and coats and shoes: he who had been the depositary of the diamonds of duchesses now took care of the mangles of washerwomen: he who had advanced thousands of pounds to the heirs of peers, now lent shillings for the accommodation of Irish labourers. And yet he had his reward. If

by day he was an old-clothesman and dealer in marine stores, by night he was a sultan, a caliph. So far from being a miser he was a spendthrift who had spent his whole fortune upon a glorious dream.

Could he have given expression to the visions that came nightly to visit him, he would have been one of the greatest poets of the world: and so should I be, if I were able to express them for him. They were not always the same, though all came to him in the same green light. Sometimes he was the winner of wonderful battles which, in their vastness, were prophetic of Armageddon: sometimes he was the sultan of a Mahomet's Paradise: sometimes he was seated on the throne of justice, or rather of vengeance, to punish all those who had injured or mocked at him by day. In the last case he used to inflict the most monstrous, the most unheard of tortures, and every groan on the part of his victims plunged him into a very agony of pleasure. Sometimes he was wandering at will through all the mines of Golconda and Peru: and they were all his own. But the grandest vision of all was one that came to him more rarely, and which, whenever it did come, left him for days after in a state of bodily and mental prostration. On such occasions he would sometimes for a week afterwards never leave his door, would scarcely eat or drink, and would let his few customers buy without coin and borrow without security.

He stood before a high altar in a vast hall, in which his more ordinary caliph-chamber, vast as it was, might have been contained a hundred times over: indeed it seemed to have the sky, of which every star was a sun, for its roof and the horizon itself, studded with mystic figures like the belt of the zodiac, for its limit. The altar itself was so lofty as to tower above the loftiest mountains of Asia, which looked dwarfed to the size of strings of pearls. All the seas and rivers of the earth flowed together before it so as to form a vast silver lake, in which gold-fish of the size of whales spouted and played and stirred the water into waves that splashed against the margin with a sound of distant bells. Flowers also, chiefly roses, hyacinths and rhododendrons, wreathed themselves about columns whose carved capitals were lost in the expanse where the emerald light changed into a golden aether. Throughout echoed, besides the bells, a confused murmur as of countless swarms of bees, in which many sorts of voices seemed to resolve themselves into one. Along the streams that poured themselves into the lake floated fleets of vessels of cedar borne along by sails of purple silk, a queen, raven-locked, and with the crescent moon in her hair, standing in the foremost prow. Immediately in front of the altar that rose out of and above all this, was erected a brazen scaffold: and on the scaffold stood Nathan Levi himself. He kneeled down before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven. It was the reconsecration of the Temple, in which he was high priest and king.

How such a man should be subject to this and to similar visions must be explained by those who are better versed in the occult properties of

emeralds and in the still more occult workings of the human soul than I. At any rate the vision endured for hours, and was as real in its seeming as if it had been real in sober fact—far more real than the miserable facts of life in which he spent his days.

When he again emerged from his magic chamber, weary with the reaction that such excitement was bound to bring, he would betake himself once more to the quarter of the town in which he sought to fill his bag with old clothes. And always, as he passed the *blanchisserie* in Bean Street, the same young girl looked up from her work and said "Good morning."

CHAPTER IX.

COUNT ANDREAS KROMESKI.

No wonder, once more, that Mr. Grode had been in a violent rage. He had expected to gain six million pounds by the expenditure of half-a-crown—that is to say, to make a clear profit of five million nine hundred and nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence upon one transaction; or at least, if his last offer had been taken, five million eight hundred and ninety-five thousand pounds: and such a disappointment was terribly hard for any business man to bear. He had flattered himself that he was the only man living who knew the secret history of the Great Emerald of Kandahar, and he had flattered himself with justice. It had been he who, when a young man, and a junior clerk in the great house of Cranstoun and Cranstoun, had been alone admitted into the confidence of the grandfather of Felicia's lover when the Great Emerald had been concealed for safety. Why he had been chosen rather than any one else for this important confidence, it is impossible to say with anything like certainty. Perhaps his employer had special reason to trust his honour and his discretion; and certainly his bluff and passionate manner gave him the air of being an honest man: perhaps he had by some means come to learn the secret, and it had become necessary, to insure his secrecy, to allow him to share it altogether. For the rest, the whole transaction had always been kept mysteriously concealed: no doubt secrecy had been an express and essential part of the contract. Who can tell what reasons of state may be involved in the pledging of a jewel worth six million of pounds? At all events Mr. Grode had been bought over, or rewarded, as the case may be, by being set up by the Mr. Cranstoun of that day in an independent business. Fascinated by the concentrated essence of wealth of which fortune had given him a glimpse, he turned diamond-merchant, and made in that capacity a considerable fortune. At all events the power to raise eighty thousand pounds at once is not bad for a man who started in life without a sixpence. But he had never lost sight of the Great Emerald of which he had caught that glimpse in his younger days; and at last the

time seemed to be at hand when he might, without risk, have made the prize his own.

No wonder that he had gone home in a rage ; no wonder that his wrath had fallen upon poor Felicia, or Pearl, as her lover chose to call her, from some fancy about her whiteness and her opal eyes. All that evening he sat by himself in a rage—like a bear with a very sore head, indeed. The next morning, when he came down to his breakfast, he found himself alone ; and he missed, as men do, the customary attentions to their morning comforts which, as long as they have them, they scorn, but which they miss none the less when they lose them. This time his angry bell was answered, not by Elise, but by another servant. Then he was still more angry with his daughter for having taken him at his word, even though he himself had ordered the cab in which she had gone away.

The domestic storm had thus fallen upon his own head in the shape of cold coffee—a beverage that invariably had the effect of putting him out of temper for the day. He felt, therefore, half remorseful for the extreme point to which he had carried his wrath ; but still, if there was one so-called virtue on which he, like most disagreeable people, prided himself, it was the virtue of consistency.

“ Well, let her go,” he said, “ to the devil, if she pleases. She will come back when she wants her luncheon.”

But it must be supposed that she did not want her luncheon ; at all events, she did not come back for it. But in answer to the cook's inquiries he had dinner laid for two, as usual. Still, however, she did not return—not even the lapse of a whole day seemed to give her an appetite—no, nor yet of another whole day. In short, day after day went by, and she did not return.

For my part, I think—still with all due deference to the Decalogue—that she was quite right in running away from such a bear ; and if she had run straight to her lover's arms and broken her promise willingly, I should not think much of any reader of this who blamed her very much for it. So, just for the sake of appearances, I will just once say “ For shame ! ” and then receive her back for my favourite heroine once more. I should certainly not think much of my *jeune premier* if he had not received her gladly, had she given him the chance. Nor do I think her disconsolate father to be so very much to be pitied, after all. People who are so very sensitive in the region of the pocket, are not apt to be over-sensitive about that of the heart. He was a successful man : and everybody knows what, in the secret of success, is joined with a good digestion. To a man who enjoys the latter, even the coldness of coffee may express no more than a single morning of desolation. Of course he continued to be angry, and thought that he continued to be very ill-used and very miserable ; but had the loss of his daughter coincided with his gaining of the emerald, I do not think that he would even have fancied himself to be either the one or the other. I am quite sure that he would have borne it very philosophically.

One evening, however, while he was sitting by himself in his “ study,”

as he chose to call the dusty front-parlour, now dustier than ever, a card was brought in to him, on which was written, not engraved, the name of "Mr. Smith, Morley's Hotel."

Mr. Smith was shown in. In spite of his thoroughly British name, he resembled in his appearance rather one of the foreign *habitués* of Bean Street than a true Briton, except that his linen seemed to have come from Madame Cornet's that very morning, which was never the case with theirs. He wore a heavy brown Austrian moustache, hair black and curling, an eccentric hat, a furred travelling cloak, and Hessian boots. Mr. Grode, however, was used to singular visitors, and pointed to a chair, while he himself assumed his favourite attitude on the hearth-rug.

"Mr. Smith is a *nom de guerre*," said his visitor, in a strong foreign accent. "I am Count Andreas Kromeski."

Mr. Grode bowed. "In what can I have the pleasure—?" he began.

"You are Mr. Grode, are you not?"

"I am Mr. Grode."

"My mission is a most delicate one. I must rely on your discretion."

Mr. Grode bowed again.

"My august master, the Czar of Caspia, is about to celebrate the marriage of his Serene Highness the Imperial Prince. It will be necessary, on that solemn occasion, to make a display of the Crown jewels. Now, I am instructed by his Excellency, the chief Minister of State, that a certain jewel, known as the Great Emerald of Kandahar, was pledged in the year 18—, with the house of Cranstoun and Cranstoun for the sum of twelve hundred thousand pounds sterling, and that you were privy to the transaction. Now, my august sovereign cannot appear on this occasion without this Emerald. It would cause the most terrible scandal; indeed the result might be a revolution."

"Do I understand that you are about to make a proposal of some kind on the part of his Majesty?"

"That is so. My august master, through the house of Stephanos, of Vienna, would pay forthwith all arrears of interest upon the loan, and give a handsome *douceur* besides, for the return of the Emerald for a single week, and would consent to the house of Cranstoun and Cranstoun sending a trustworthy agent to receive it back at the end of that time. I went straight to the address of the house of Cranstoun and Cranstoun. I found the doors closed. I have made inquiries about its representative; he is nowhere. They tell me at the Embassy that the firm is bankrupt, and that its chief committed suicide. I shall lose my head, or be banished to Tartary, if I return without the Emerald. They will say I have stolen it, and perhaps cut me open alive to see if I have swallowed it, and forget to sew me up again afterwards. Where is it? Who has the custody? *Mon Dieu*, there will be war all over Europe if anything has happened to the Great Emerald of Kandahar! Here are my credentials: you will see that they are quite *en règle*. As to my identity, I refer you to the secretary of Legation at the Embassy."

Mr. Grode just glanced at the papers, and then looked grave and inscrutable.

"All the interest to be paid, you say? Does his Majesty know that it was at five per cent., and has been in arrear this two and thirty years? That it amounts, in fact," he added, making a rapid calculation, "to just eighteen millions of francs—nearly two millions sterling? And that, reckoning compound interest—which, as you are probably aware, the house of Cranstoun and Cranstoun are entitled to do"—here he called his gold pencil-case into play—"it in reality amounts to one hundred and forty-five million eight hundred and sixty thousand seven hundred and fifty francs, or exactly five million eight hundred and thirty-four thousand four hundred and thirty pounds!"

"My august master must have the Emerald for a week, if he pledges all the revenues of Caspia for a hundred years."

Mr. Grode's eyes glowed with avarice. The emerald was indeed worth something now. The very remembrance of Felicia faded from his mind.

"That is well," he said with a calmness that he found it difficult to assume. "You have come to the right quarter; and I promise you that his Majesty shall not have high terms. When is the marriage of his Royal Highness?"

"In three months from to-day."

"And you will require the Emerald in——?"

"A fortnight before, at latest."

"Meet me then at the Embassy this day two months—the 14th of October. You will, of course, bring an expert with you. Of course the interest will be paid on delivery, or, at least, good security given?"

"Of course. I have full powers. There is no difficulty, then?" And Count Andreas Kromeski, feeling that his head was secure, fell upon Mr. Grode and hugged him to his heart—the only man in the world who had ever been guilty of such insanity.

"None whatever," answered Mr. Grode, disengaging himself from the Count's embrace. "It is in safe hands; and this day two months it shall be in yours."

CHAPTER X.

THE FEELINGS OF A FATHER.

HE had not reckoned without his host. There are few things that a man with a few millions in view will not manage somehow. Greater apparent impossibilities are done every day for the sake of a few hundreds.

More than one idea floated through his mind when Count Andreas left him, for each of which much was to be said. But the best and safest seemed to be to put himself at once in communication with Arthur Cranstoun, play the part of the forgiving father, inform him of the possession

of the stone by the Jew, obtain the latter by legal means, and then, in conjunction with his son-in-law, build up a great new house of Cranstoun and Grode, or perhaps Grode and Cranstoun. The Jew's possession was obviously illegal: and there was but one serious difficulty about the matter—that neither he, nor any one else, knew what had become of the once wealthy money-lender. After the first nine days' wonder at the extraordinary price paid for the dead magpie, it was generally believed that its purchaser had taken himself abroad. Still, however, no matter how far he might have travelled, the world is very narrow after all, especially since the invention of steam-boats and railway-carriages; and a man of the appearance of Nathan Levi was not one to be lost like a needle in a bottle of hay.

At all events, the very next morning Mr. Grode, having passed a night feverish with excitement, set out to put in operation the first part of his scheme, which was to receive his daughter and her now once more wealthy lover back to his arms. He learned from the solicitor who had acted for the latter in his transactions with the creditors of the firm that his client was now living in Newman Street, though how he was living there he did not know: he only feared that Mr. Cranstoun's generosity and sense of honour had left him very hard up—an account which Mr. Grode, since it would make his own conduct seem the more disinterested, was not sorry to hear.

He betook himself, then, to Newman Street, and inquired for Mr. Cranstoun at the house to which he had been directed. Mr. Cranstoun, however, was out; but would he be good enough to wait his return? So he was shown up into Arthur's room on the third floor, which proved to be a painter's studio of a most rudimentary kind, or rather the studio of a most rudimentary painter. To rival Fra Angelico had been one of the grand ideas of his prosperous days, and with that object he had always dabbled in painting, and, for a time, had worked at it with a will; and now it seemed to him the best way in which he could make his talents pay. Of course it was an insane piece of folly. To imagine or to copy Saints and Holy Families after the style of Cimabue—for in that direction, as being diametrically opposed to the taste of the world, had his own taste carried him—had been, heretofore, only a harmless waste of time: but now it was useless even for the decoration of churches that went in for pre-Raphaelitism in ritual and ornament. For he was beyond the pale even of the "P. R. B." in the extravagance of his mediævalism; and, unlike the early members of the Brotherhood, did not redeem his mediævalism by any striking merits as a painter. If he had only accepted some employment in another house of business—and there were plenty of leading houses that, out of sheer kindness and good-feeling, would have received him gladly, without expecting much from his services in return—he would have been acting simply as a man of common-sense. But then he felt, or fancied, that he was unfitted for business by nature; and though, for Felicia's sake, he would with a good grace have put into his pocket any quantity of personal fastidiousness, he still did not feel justified—and, in this feeling, he may be credited with perfect honesty—

in permitting others to buy worthless services as a matter of charity. And he felt—as many like him have fancied and will doubtless fancy to the end of time—that to be able to paint a picture is to be able to sell one also. In his good days he had mixed much with celebrated and successful painters, and had known the great prices that their works commanded. With the unsuccessful majority he had not mixed, or he would have learned a very different lesson. But, as it was, to paint, according to his experience, meant to coin gold: and perhaps, too, he made the even still more common error of mistaking inclination for genius. Any way, with the best and most honest motives possible, he committed two of the gravest follies of which any one can be guilty: he refused to receive pay simply because he believed himself to be incapable of doing anything to deserve it, and he became a painter because he thought it the best way to make something more than a bare living. And it is difficult to say which, from a practical point of view, was the greater folly of the two.

The studio, however, looked ambitious, if not business-like; but the contents and surroundings could not but make a man like Mr. Grode, who knew something about pictures and the way in which they are made to sell, smile. There is a certain order of painter, bordering for the most part upon the amateur, which cannot paint without the talismanic and stimulating influence of a velvet smoking-cap. When this is so in any particular case, nothing more need be said: the type is defined, and its individual members are as like one another as peas from the same shell. Mr. Grode knew this well, and the corners of his heavy mouth, unused to smiling as they were, drew up with more than the mere shadow of a sneer when he saw the looked-for cap, very much the worse for wear, suspended gracefully by the side of an easel large enough to bear one of the great battle-pieces at Versailles. He was engaged in speculations upon the follies of other men, when the door opened and in came the painter himself, as good-looking as of old, but rather thin and hungry-looking too. His creditors had insisted upon allowing him something, and he had accepted a hundred a year under strong protest, and only on condition that it was to be considered as a loan to be repaid one day—a sum that, for a bad economist, whose habits had always been very expensive, was enough to keep him from the workhouse, and no more.

He came into the room eagerly: perhaps he expected to find some great art patron who had come to give him a commission for a thousand pounds. Seeing Mr. Grode, however, he came to a full stop. But the latter, with as genial and hearty a smile as he was able to assume, held out his hand frankly and warmly.

"So that is the way you treat me, is it?" he said, half laughingly. "Well, well, young people will be young people, I suppose, and we old fellows must expect to be shoved off into the corner. I ran off with my own poor late-lamented, who's dead and gone—Lissy's mother, you know—and I don't believe we lived a bit the unhappier." (Nor a bit the

happier, the late Mrs. Grode would have said with a sigh, had she still been in the flesh, and had she been by to hear.) "But why the Juice you young people always treat us old ones as if we was alligators, beats me hollow. If I'd only thought Lissy, bless her! cared for you as much as that comes to, or you cared for her, I wouldn't have said a word: and I don't go back from my word, not I, even if a man does come to Queer Street without any fault of his own. And you're a first-chop fellow—a right down good fellow, I always say, and one to make my dear girl as happy as she deserves to be. The state of mind I've been in since she went away, as if I'd meant to be took so short up at a word! Well, well, let bygones be bygones. There's the hand of Peter Grode!—and we'll get you well before the wind again, never fear. And now where's Lissy? I must pretend to give her a bit of a scolding, you know."

Arthur's delicacy approached fastidiousness, and the vulgarity of Felicia's father always jarred upon him very considerably. It was a standing wonder to him how it was that such a man should have been the father of Pearl. But, after the first moment of new surprise, he took the sudden geniality for what he supposed it to mean, and remembered that the nature of the husk is no indication of that of the kernel. And, after all, no one can be very outrageously astonished at another man's doing what, under similar circumstances, he himself would have done.

"Then you give your consent?" he asked, eagerly. "You take back Felicia?"

"Neither the one nor the other. I don't take her back, because I mean you to keep her: and I don't give my consent, because that's rather too late in the day, I take it."

"How shall I thank you for such generosity? I wronged you terribly, I must confess—I fancied that my misfortunes——"

"Well, well, say no more. Where's Lissy? Is she here?"

"Here?"

"What—aren't you man and wife?"

"It is not my fault that we are not, I must own. I have pressed her to share my fortune over and over again. But she has always given me one answer—that her promise to you must keep her single till she is of age."

"Then there goes my promise out of the window. I'm glad that she had so much obedience left, however. Not that she seems to have lost much by it," he thought to himself, as he looked round at the painting-room. "Where is she then? Not far off, I'll go bail?"

The young painter, however, did not feel by any means so genially towards Mr. Grode on account of the past as he did on account of the future. He could not prevent his voice being a little grave and stern as he replied, "She has to work for her living, like myself. She is helping the mother of her servant by mending clothes at a laundry in Bean Street, Soho."

"And she preferred this to marrying you?" Even Mr. Grode felt just a little ashamed.

"She would have preferred starvation to breaking her promise."

Her father took out his pocket-handkerchief, and even made a pretence of using it. At any rate, if he did not wipe his eyes, he blew his nose.

"This has all been a sad misunderstanding," he said; "very sad—very sad indeed. We must put all this to rights, off hand. You know where to find her, I suppose?"

"Perfectly."

"Then come."

The two put on their hats and went forth arm-in-arm, as Mr. Grode insisted upon doing. Arthur was raised once more to all the delight of new-born life and perfect happiness. So Pearl was to be his wife, not in three long years, but now! This one thought kept ringing through his heart like an unaccompanied, unbroken melody, to the exclusion of all others. Mr. Grode's feelings were not quite so musical: but even he looked forward with what he persuaded himself was generous and disinterested satisfaction to the reconciliation that was about to ensue.

It was still quite early in the day, for Mr. Grode was accustomed to go about his business betimes. Now it used once upon a time to be considered that it is the early bird that picks up the worm. Of all worms in the world with whom he wished to meet, Nathan Levi stood first in the catalogue. And—could he believe his own eyes?—there he was, or else his twin brother, passing a door in Bean Street close to the door of which sat Pearl, as I choose to call her now, who greeted him with a nod that seemed to say, "Good morning, Nathan Levi!"

And yet could that ragged, foul-looking, miserable old-clothesman, prowling about the back-slums of Soho, be the possessor of the great Kandahar Emerald, upon which millions might be raised at any given moment? Had he borne the least resemblance to more ordinary human beings, Mr. Grode would most certainly not have believed his own eyes. But that there should be two such monsters in the world would be a greater miracle than that Mr. Grode should be deceived. So he weighed probabilities, and came to the only conclusion open to him—namely, that he saw Levi in the very flesh before him.

At any cost he must be tracked and followed at once, even if the meeting with his long-lost daughter had to be postponed for a month to come. Such chances do not come to a man twice in a year. Most men would have found a difficulty in finding an excuse ready to hand. But Mr. Grode was a man of resource in practical difficulties, and did not much care about being considered wanting in sentiment. He looked at his watch suddenly. "Ah," he said, with a deep sigh, "there is the dear girl herself—poor child! What a thing is the feelings of a father! There she is—and I have a most important engagement—business—in just thirty-two minutes. Go you and prepare her—I shall be back in an hour. If I'm not, then take her home. She will find a father's arms open to receive her—a fatted calf killed. Till then, God bless you both!"

Arthur, who had not as yet experienced the feelings of a father, stared at him with surprise. He certainly did not admire the feelings of a man of business, and congratulated himself more than ever upon not having entered upon a career in which they were acquired. However, he could only accept it as a phenomenon of the practical nature, and hastened on to the *blanchisserie*, while Mr. Grode set out closely to follow the old-clothesman, but in such a way that he himself should not be observed.

He did not return in an hour. On the contrary, his pursuit of the Great Emerald of Kandahar, as represented by its owner, led him a chase as long as it was tiresome. Fortunately for him, he was a good walker, and a good waiter, too, or he would have been wearied out, and bored to death as well. He had to make a regular tour, up and down a hundred streets, and round a score of squares, to kick his heels in front of doors sometimes for half an hour at a stretch, and to watch his game down areas and up blind alleys. And all the time he had to enjoy the ceaseless music of that shrill, harsh voice, as it continued its monotonous cry of "Old clo'!—an old clo'!"

He had to do all this, too, upon an empty stomach, for the game in question kept creeping on without giving its pursuer a single available opportunity of obtaining a mouthful of food. This was almost the worst part of the business, for Mr. Grode was very careful of his inner man, and always had his chop regularly at half-past one. At last, however, his chase began to draw to an end. The evening was beginning to fall, and the grimy shades of Soho were being regained by both pursuer and pursued once more. Ere long, the quarry was driven to bay, or, at all events, was run to earth, in its den.

But Mr. Grode was not content with this. He first took a turn or two in front of the slop-shop, to impress the locality of it upon his memory, and then went up what looked like an arched *cul-de-sac* that ran by its side. The minutest point in relation to the presumed abode of such a treasure might turn out to be of importance one of these days. The arched passage in question led into the small back court which has already been mentioned; and so far he seemed to have learned all that, for the present, was learnable. Faint and exhausted, he was on the point of turning homeward, when he saw the gleam of a candle shining through a blindless window and reflecting itself feebly upon the chips of broken glass and oyster-shell that formed part of the heap of dust and offal.

He went up to the window, and saw what the reader has already seen—he saw, shining before him, in as much splendour as it could borrow from a single wax taper, the glory of the Great Emerald of Kandahar.

For more than an instant he stood as if he were chained to the spot, not seeing what Levi saw, but, nevertheless, gloating over and drinking in what he did see with greedy eyes. He forgot at once his bodily hunger and fatigue in the excitement of being so near, almost within arm's reach, of the object of the lust of his soul. With only three miserable panes of glass between him and the jewel, it is almost wonderful that he did not

yield to the sudden temptation that fell upon him in the first moment of his fascination to dash the window to pieces with his fist, to spring into the room, to send the hunchback flying against the wall, to snatch the Emerald from his hands, and to run with it to Count Andreas before its purchaser knew whether he was upon his head or upon his heels. It would have been as easy to a strong and active man like him as the raising of an eyelid. He must most infallibly have yielded to it had not the moon at that moment peeped out from behind a cloud, and for an instant thrown his portly shadow through the window upon the floor of the room.

The effect upon the Jew was something fearful to behold. His lower jaw dropped still lower upon his breast, his hair literally bristled up on end, as though an electric current had passed through it with full force, and he started up in a paroxysm of terror as he thrust the ruler of his life into his capacious mouth, prepared to swallow it, if need were, rather than allow it to be seen by mortal man. So demoniacal was his aspect, that Mr. Grode, though no coward, fairly turned and fled, in sheer panic, as men fly from danger in dreams.

Nor did he stop until the gaslights of Oxford Street recalled him to himself once more. Then he dropped into the nearest restaurant, and drank plenteously of brandy before he could calm his excited nerves sufficiently to go home, in order to take his daughter and his future son-in-law to his paternal arms.

CHAPTER XL.

A BAD BARGAIN.

WHEN Mr. Grode left Arthur Cranstoun, he went straight to the door of the *blanchisserie*, where, though not a very frequent visitor, he was well known. Is it heresy against the clothes' philosophy, to say that Pearl did not look any the less Pearl for her poor dress? Certainly, she did not in his eyes; and it was, at any rate, impossible for any one to confuse her with her Norman companions, who had come to bear for her the real and warm affection of partisans, tempered, however, by a great deal of respect. She would willingly have laid aside her accidental social superiority, and tried her best to do so; but they insisted upon considering her as their superior, even against her will.

"I have come to take you for a walk, Pearl," said her lover. "Never mind your work for to-day; nor for to-morrow either. In fact, Madame Cornet will have to do without you altogether, I am afraid."

The gladness of his voice was echoed in her eyes. She laid down her work at once, and went out with him while he told her his news—news which made the square of Soho, round which they walked, as bright and pleasant as if its smoky atmosphere had been made up of the breath of roses. Before the end of the hour they returned to the *blanchisserie*,

and, having waited there a reasonable time beyond it, set out, according to her father's instructions, to return home. If Mr. Grode's walk had been disagreeable, theirs was the most delightful in the world. She even forgot that it was in the garb of a servant that she was returning to the house where she had once reigned as mistress.

The rest of that delightful day was even more delightful still. She left him for one long half-hour, it is true, while she made herself fit to be seen in her own eyes, thinking all the while how she might look best in his—as though that required the toilette of a single minute!—while he waited alone in the dining-room, almost too joyful to be impatient for her return. And then they were together all the afternoon till the evening came on, and then for an hour or two of the twilight: that was the best part of all. At last, however,—too soon—came the thundering knock at the door that both knew so well. As they started a few steps apart, Mr. Grode entered, embraced his daughter, and shook Arthur warmly by the hand. He was flushed and excited; but to them there was more than sufficient cause for his apparent emotion. The remainder of the evening was spent as a family feast of reconciliation, for which Mr. Grode killed his fattest calf, making his children quite ashamed of themselves, and putting them both completely in the wrong. But Arthur thought it all very right and natural, and Pearl was far too happy to be surprised at a sudden change that might, had she been a reader, have reminded her of the reformed and forgiving father in Christmas stories.

But to dwell upon scenes of content, is to provoke that demon of dulness who is, at the best of times, only far too ready to swoop down upon tellers of tales. I prefer such dulness myself—content and happiness are, alas! birds of far too rare a feather to be let slip as soon as they chance to make one of their visits to earth. At least, so seemed to think Arthur Cranstoun during the three weeks that preceded his marriage. He did not think the time dull, nor did Felicia, though they were together for the greater part of every day. As for Mr. Grode, he was only too good. Not only did he hurry on the marriage, not only did he not bother about settlements or details, but he left the two almost entirely to themselves, and spent not only the days but the evenings also in going about his private affairs, which seemed, at this happy period, to have much to do with a certain Mr. Smith, who came often to the house, but was never seen by any one but Mr. Grode.

But, in point of fact, Mr. Smith had personally and directly far less to do with his day's doings than appeared on the surface. On the day following the reconciliation feast, Mr. Grode went, very early in the morning, to the scene of his panic, and found the master of the slop-shop in his shirt-sleeves, busily engaged in brushing a very old pair of trousers. The latter started, and turned a leaden paleness when he saw his visitor.

"Good morning, Levi," said Mr. Grode. "We have ups and downs, it seems—to-day, you; to-morrow, me. Who'd have thought of seeing you here?"

"Yesh, mishter, we have upsh and downsh!" And he heaved a deep sigh, which contained all the pathos of which the grotesque is capable.

"And yours is the downs, it seems. Well, and what d'ye think of the magpie now?"

"Ah, mishter, 't wash that infernal magpie undone me. I wish to 'eaven I'd took your prishe."

"And you're as poor as Job, then?"

"A long shight poorer, mishter. Ah, I thought you vosh at your old tricksh; and how that there bleshed magpie 'd turn out a varnish over. No such luck. Sho I unpainted 'im, and tosshed 'im into the fire."

Mr. Grode gave a long and deliberate wink, and, having seated himself comfortably on the counter, as if for a long talk, said: "I don't think you did, though, Levi."

"Elp me Moshesh, I tosshed 'im in!"

"But didn't you find something first, Levi?"

"Elp me Moshesh——"

"Come, it's no good trying it on with me. I know all about that, and more too. Don't be frightened, man. You're poor, you say? Starving, eh? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yesh, Mishter Grode; but if I vosh ten timesh shtarving, I tosshed 'im in!"

"Bah! pooh! That won't do with *me*. Can't get a market for the stone, I suppose? Doubtful title, eh? I should think so. But never mind: title or no title, fraud or no fraud, I'll repeat my offer, and more. I'll give you a hundred thousand down on the nail—guineas—and no questions asked. There!"

"But the shtone's vort—no, mishter, I 'ave not got nothing; I 'ave not got no shtone. I tosshed 'im *all* in."

"You know there's a stone, then?"

"I? I never shaid nothing about no shtone. I don't know vot you mean, mishter."

"Tell that to the marines! You know as well as I; but you can't get a market, and I can. I shall make my own profit, of course. Come, a hundred and fifty thousand: not a penny more."

"You may go your vaysh, Mishter Grode. I vish I 'ad 'im. Would I shtarve with a shtone vort a hundred and fifty thousand poundsh! Am I mad? But I 'ave not got no shtone—no nothing. I tosshed 'im in."

"You mean to say you are starving, and that you refuse a hundred and fifty thousand guineas, all paid down?"

The bait was tempting. He would regain at one blow all that he had lost and more. Mr. Grode watched his face triumphantly. But once more the fish escaped him.

"I mean to shay I tosshed 'im in."

"Ah, you're afraid of the law, perhaps. Do you know that it was pledged property—that the owner is claiming it?"

"I don't know nothing, but that I tossed 'im in."

"You obstinate blockhead! We'll give you an indemnity, as well as the cash down—a hundred and fifty thousand guineas."

"You may give me vot you please, it ish all von to me. I only got but a magpie, and I tossed 'im in."

"Do you know what the law will have to say to your bargain?"

"I tossed 'im in."

"A hundred and fifty thousand!"

"I tossed 'im in."

"Transportation for life!"

"I tossed 'im in."

"I wish you had tossed yourself in! You infernal idiot, you will hear more of this!" And so Mr. Grode walked off, discomfited, but by no means conquered. At all events, he was now convinced of Levi's possession of the emerald; and that such a man should continue to refuse a hundred and fifty thousand guineas for an otherwise unmarketable article was simply incredible. "I shall hear from him before to-morrow," he said to himself as he walked away.

The Jew had spoken the literal truth when he said that he was starving. For some days he had eaten no more food than was just sufficient to keep him alive. But no sooner had the heavy step of Mr. Grode died away in the distance than he ran to his hiding-place, and covered his treasure with kisses.

"What?" he cried aloud, "part with you?—with my life first!"

He was infatuated with this piece of green crystal that contained for him so many wonders, through which he had entered into the world of the beautiful. Then he carefully restored it to its place, swept the dust over the trap-door, so that it might be invisible, locked up the door of his shop, and once more set out upon his rounds for the day.

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